

# Contemporary

# Religions in Japan

Vol. 1

March 1960

No. 1

## CONTENTS

From the Editorial Board	1
From the Editor	2

### Articles

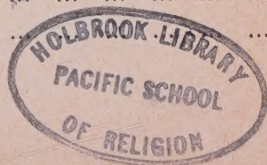
The Religious Situation in Present-day Japan	
... .. Keiji Nishitani	5
Religion and Morality	25
... .. Yasumasa Oshima	
The Principles of Shrine Shinto	39
... .. Naofusa Hirai	
Soka Gakkai and the Nichiren Sho Sect (1)	55
— An Institute Study —	

### Book Reviews

Kidder, Japan before Buddhism	71
... .. Delmer Brown	
Thomas, Protestant Beginnings in Japan	73
... .. Enkichi Kan	
Iglehart, A Century of Protestant Christianity	
in Japan	74
... .. Enkichi Kan	
Masunaga, The Soto Approach to Zen	76
... .. Fumio Masutani	

### The Religious World in Japan

Understanding Japanese Religions (1)	78
Questions and Problems	83
Chronology for 1959	84
Religious Statistics	96



## Translations and Official Documents

Articles in the Constitution concerning religion and related human rights ... ..	99
---	----

## Institute News

Introducing the International Institute for the Study of Religions ... ..	103
--	-----

All Japanese names in CONTEMPORARY RELIGIONS IN JAPAN follow the Japanese English-language press and the traditional Western usage in placing the personal names first.

Articles in CONTEMPORARY RELIGIONS IN JAPAN do not necessarily represent the views of the International Institute for the Study of Religions or the Editorial Board. The Editorial Staff is responsible for the selection and acceptance of articles and their translation. Responsibility for the opinions expressed and the accuracy of facts published in the articles should be attributed to the individual authors.

Copyright by the International Institute for the Study of Religions.

## CONTRIBUTORS

### Articles

- Hirai, Naofusa —Associate Professor of Shinto, Kokugakuin University.  
Secretary of the Institute for Japanese Classics and Culture.
- Nishitani, Keiji —Professor of Philosophy of Religion, Kyōto University.
- Ōshima, Yasumasa —Professor of Ethics, Tōkyō Education University.

### Book Reviews

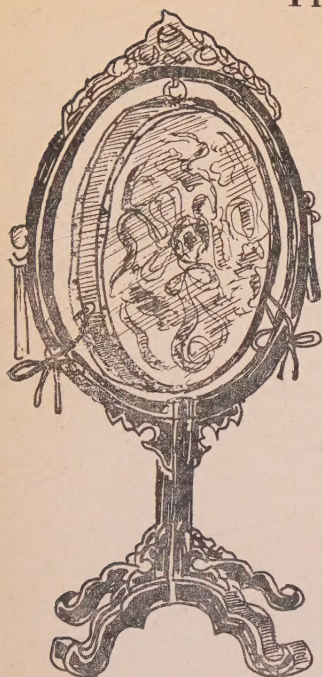
- Brown, Delmer —Professor of Japanese History, University of California.
- Kan, Enkichi —Dean of the Faculty of Literature and Professor of Christianity, St. Paul's University.
- Masutani, Fumio —Professor of Buddhism, Tōkyō University of Foreign Studies.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Board of Editors wishes to express its special appreciation to the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) for permission to use the addresses by Drs. Nishitani and Ōshima, which were first broadcast over its network.

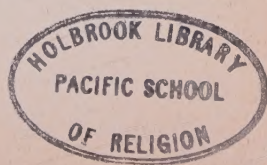


## From the Editorial Board



The need for a scholarly, non-sectarian English language journal devoted to Japanese religions has been obvious for a long time. Indeed, view of the widespread interest in the subject, it is surprising that there are not several in the field already. The fact is, however, that at present there is no periodical of this nature on the market. There are, of course, several magazines published by sectarian groups which deal with one or more religions but, as **Contemporary Religions in Japan** makes its debut, there is no other non-sectarian periodical covering the entire field of religion in this country.

**Contemporary Religions in Japan** is sponsored by the *International Institute for the Study of Religions*, an independent, non-profit, non-sectarian foundation. The general purpose of the *Institute* is to promote mutual understanding between persons of different faiths and to develop international understanding on a religious level by the study of religions in Japan and abroad. Primarily, the *Institute* assists foreign scholars, religious leaders, and other interested persons in gaining a better understanding of religions in Japan. This journal has been inaugurated by the *Institute* as one means of fulfilling this purpose. The *Institute* also endeavors to assist Japanese in the understanding of religions abroad, and to this end it publishes a Japanese language bi-monthly "International Religious News" (*Kokusai Shukyo News*).



**Contemporary Religions in Japan** is intended to serve all who are interested in this general field. Suggestions for its improvement and how it can better meet the readers' needs will be appreciated. Your cooperation in making the journal a success is earnestly solicited.

Hideo Kishimoto

Chairman, Editorial Board

## From the Editor

The purpose of **Contemporary Religions in Japan** is to provide material and information that will assist foreign religionists, scholars and other interested persons in understanding religions in Japan. In attempting to do this the Editorial Board does not presume to have all the answers. Neither does it have any preconceived idea as to what necessarily constitutes a correct understanding. Moreover, it does not intend to imply that religions in Japan are particularly misunderstood, or that the necessity of understanding religions in Japan is any greater than elsewhere.

The Editorial Board is unaware of similar journals in other parts of the world, but hopes that, if such

do exist, liaison can be established with them and that together, within the framework of prescribed objectives, a contribution can be made toward increasing international and intercultural understanding on a religious level.

In regard to its contents, **Contemporary Religions in Japan** proposes to publish:

1. Essays and addressess, mainly translations, which will present the results of contemporary scholarship in the field of religion. (However, original works in English, such as Mr. Naofusa Hirai's article in this issue, and the research of foreign scholars also will be published occasionally.)

2. Essays and addresses by Japanese Religious leaders on specific



## FROM THE EDITOR

religions or phases of religion in Japan, which set forth the tenets and practices of the faiths represented and thus will constitute "first-hand" sources(in translation) regarding these faiths.

3. The results of research carried out by the staff of the *International Institute for the Study of Religions*.

4. Book reviews, news, reports of activities, facts, and translations of documents related to religions in Japan.

5. Matters related to the International Institute for the Study of Religions.

As a rule articles will not be solicited. Instead, first place will be given to the results of Japanese scholarship in the field of religion already published in Japanese. Readers can thus feel assured that for the most part the material has not been prepared for foreign consumption.

It is expected that in the future the space required for "Questions and Problems" may increase considerably. Readers are invited to send in their questions. If comments of interest to the general readers are received, these also may

be published,

Editorial comment will be devoted primarily to the presentation of background information deemed necessary or useful in guiding readers in their understanding of religions in Japan.

In regard to the name, a different one was announced in the advance notices, but the proposed name was so similar to a magazine already in the field that the present name has been adopted. As a matter of fact, this also is somewhat similar to others already in use. Apparently some similarity can not be entirely avoided.

The idea of producing a quarterly journal in place of the **Institute's** bulletins first occurred about two years ago. It arose when it became evident that a more flexible medium was required to meet the needs of the membership and to reach a larger class of readers. Unfortunately, however, it was not possible to make the change at once. Some projects already in process had to be completed first and arrangements had to be made for the necessary personnel to handle the additional work.

**Contemporary Religions in Japan** is not a propaganda organ. It does not associate itself with any particular philosophical, theological or religious point of view, or any theory of religion. Questions concerning the truth or falsity of a religious teaching or religious system, and value judgements regarding them are not within the province of this journal. On the positive side its point of view is that of objective, factual reporting and scholarly analysis and description. In regard to general style, a middle course, which is neither too academic nor too "popular" will be followed.

In assuming the responsibilities of editor, the undersigned makes his debut in the world of journalism with mixed feelings of exuberance,

confidence, and not a little trepidation: exuberance, because of the wide opportunities which lie ahead and the thrill of adventuring into a relatively unexplored field; confidence, because of the assurance of cooperation on the part of many competent Japanese religious leaders and scholars who are eager to make the venture succeed; trepidation, because of a very obvious lack of qualifications for this very difficult undertaking. Therefore, he earnestly craves the sympathetic cooperation and constructive criticism of the reader in order that the venture itself may be a success.

*William P. Woodard*





## THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN PRESENT-DAY JAPAN

By Dr. Keiji Nishitani,  
Professor of Kyoto University

Our subject, "The Religious Situation in Present-day Japan," confronts us with the fact that generally speaking the Japanese people are indifferent to religion. However, this indifference is not entirely unique to this country. It is, in fact, somewhat common throughout the modern world and can be noted even in Europe and America. In Europe, however, Christianity is still active and exerts a real influence, while in Japan there are exceptional features which make the situation quite different.

### I

#### **The Westernization of the Japanese People**

What is the reason for these exceptional features? It is, I believe, inescapably connected with Japanese history. After the Meiji Restoration, Occidental culture was vigorously introduced into Japan and our life was very much Westernized not only in its outward, but in its inner aspects as well. Consequently, there developed a deep historical and cultural chasm between the present and the past. For example, many types of science, various techniques, and new political, economic, and educational systems were introduced from the West, so that the life of the Japanese was almost totally changed into the ways of living,

## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS SITUATION

thinking, observing, and feeling of Western people. Even our sensibilities changed. Yet at the same time something fundamental, a formative element in the development of Western history, was not accepted by Japan, and this created a problem. I refer, of course, to Western religion and philosophy.

### **Parliamentary Government**

Consider, for example, parliamentary government. Needless to say, its basic concept is political freedom and equality, which rose from the still more basic idea that people are free and equal in their fundamental character as human beings. In the West, this idea had its origin in the Christian view of man which, briefly stated, is that individuals regardless of their social status, property, education etc., are fundamentally equal before God as human beings. The same religious consciousness that transcends and abolishes all such things as social status, property, and education, has also produced the basic consciousness of freedom.

Moreover, this basic consciousness of freedom and equality together with its religious foundation, has been taken into serious consideration in the philosophy of the West; and thus the concept of political freedom and equality, which is the foundation of parliamentary government, is itself based on a religious and philosophical principle. Needless to say, politicians in the West do not always act as this fundamental principle demands. The so-called secularization of Christian principles is showing its political effects more and more. Nevertheless, the religious and philosophical point of view always underlies the political concept of freedom and equality and in case of



## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS SITUATION

need lays claim to the attitude of politicians.

In Japan, however, when the parliamentary system of government was introduced, together with the concept of political freedom and the "sciences" of politics and law, the underlying religious and philosophical principle was not accepted. Consequently, only the outward system and the political concept of parliamentary government, separated from the fundamental consciousness of the freedom of human beings as human beings, were established. I think this is the reason why parliamentary government has not yet taken root in this country. It has not taken root in the inwardness of the people. In other words, because it does not involve the religious spirit, which lies at its foundation, parliamentary government in Japan does not touch the root of the people's mind.

### Beethoven's Ninth Symphony

The same can be said regarding other areas of experience. We are sometimes moved by Beethoven's music, the Ninth Symphony, for example. At the depth of Beethoven's mind there was a strong religious spirituality that manifests itself in his music. We can sense, while listening to it, the spiritual breath in it. But although we listen to the same music I think there is a fundamental difference between the feeling of Europeans, who have been brought up breathing the spiritual atmosphere of Christianity, and the feeling of we Japanese, who have been brought up in another atmosphere. In Europeans there must be awakened a vivid sense of the religious spirituality that is breathing in the Ninth Symphony. That spiritually must be something real and something close to them, while it is not to

## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS SITUATION

us. The sense of reality felt by Europeans on hearing the finale of the chorus, for example, cannot be experienced by Japanese in the same sense.

This may be compared to the difference between pressed and living flowers, or between a wrestling or baseball match on television and one which we see at the edge of the ring or at the baseball grounds. In one case we feel a vital atmosphere, while in the other we do not. This vital atmosphere is sensed only when it emanates from living wrestlers with their hot breath or from living flowers in their shining colours. In the case of the Ninth Symphony, what is called the religious breath can be really felt only in such a vital atmosphere. Therefore, the sensibility to such an atmosphere becomes real only when we are actually in it. Perhaps it does not become real, perhaps it does not grow into an actual feeling in its true sense, even in the case of Europeans who have become indifferent to the Christian faith and find therein no vital atmosphere. How then can it be real to us? We are hardly conscious of such a slight difference, yet I think it is indeed a major problem.

However much impressed we may be by Beethoven's music, there must be a fundamental limitation in our impression. As in the case of parliamentary government, the music does not reach the very depth of our heart, our spiritual consciousness. The understanding of the music must stop at a little shallower level than the depth of the heart. Even when we are moved from the bottom of our hearts by Beethoven's music, it seems inevitable that there must remain in the innermost region of the heart a blank, an empty space.



## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS SITUATION

As was said above, all things, including our mode of living, our way of looking at things and our responses, have been Westernized. Westernization has destroyed almost all our traditions, including the traditional spirituality, the religions, and philosophies of our ancestors; and what may be a substitute for the traditional spirituality has not as yet been imported. Consequently we have an empty place in the foundation of our life, at the depth of our spiritual being.

### **Philosophy and Religion are not Readily Transplantable**

There are good reasons for what we have been saying. Such things as philosophy and religion by their very nature cannot be readily transplanted in the same way as techniques and political systems, for example, can. When a religion or philosophy is transplanted, there is no other way but for it to spring up from the inner source in the mind of the people. Such is their nature. In other words, they belong to the field of human self-consciousness, or self-awareness. They cannot be easily transplanted, because they are connected with one's most fundamental consciousness and with matters which concern one's own true self. The path can be opened only by each one alone, and attained only by one's own effort. It cannot be handed over to or taken from a person like something material or imported from another country like something ready-made. When we act, or feel, or think of something, there lies at the bottom of all such experiences a basic dimension, where the religious significance is asked or philosophical proof is sought.

For example, even such things as a fair election under a parliamentary government, or the real impression of Beethoven's

music, must have something to do with the above-mentioned basic dimension wherein our fundamental self-awakenedness arises. It is in this fundamental place that the mind of modern Japanese in general has a blank spot, an emptiness. They seem to have something hollow at the root of their spirit.

### **The Decline of Religious Influence**

Generally speaking, religion means to become aware of the unique relationship to the Absolute in one's self. To seek after religious truth means to endeavor to find such a unique relationship in which we are to be made truly alive and enlightened by the eternal Life and Light that transcends our short life and death. Only such a relationship can give a steady basis to our existence and make us truly become ourselves. By religion we are given an indestructible faith, a firm confidence. If this is lacking, all other things become rootless. Religion is, so to speak, the rivet of the fan of life. Therefore, all races at all times have sought religion and it has functioned for them.

Needless to say, there have always been religions in Japan. Shinto, Buddhism and Confucianism have existed in this country and have taught the Way of the Kami, the Way of the Buddha, or the Way of Heaven, showing us our relation to the Absolute, or the great Life and Light which transcends us. In this regard, our ancestors lived at a higher spiritual level than we do now, in so far as this most fundamental point for human beings is concerned.

Until the middle of the Meiji era the religious mind in Japan seems to have been effective in the formation of human life. After that, as this country was more Westernized, the effect



## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS SITUATION

of religion suddenly lessened. Since then the traditional religions have become alienated from actualities and have ceased to work vitally in our social and mental life. For example, many Japanese visit the Ryuanji temple or the Saihoji temple in Kyoto to admire the gardens there. Sometimes their admiration amounts almost to enthusiasm. I wonder, however, whether many visitors today can understand the spirituality and appreciate the religious mood—in this case the Zen Buddhist mood and spirituality—which manifests itself in those gardens, as truly as the Japanese of olden times did when Zen Buddhism was functioning as a living religion? What I said about Beethoven's music can be said also about the garden of Ryuanji. It is doubtful whether many visitors in their admiration are really inspired by it, or whether their emotional responses are true ones.

Modern Japanese have alienated themselves from the religions of the East and they have lost spiritual mentality which existed among the people of old. At the same time they have not accepted the religion and philosophy of the West. At least this can be said about the people in general. Therefore, the inner structure of the life of the modern Japanese is different both from that of modern Westerners and also from that of Japanese of the past. It exists under quite exceptional circumstances. We think that we lead a normal life as human beings. But from a broad viewpoint it can be said that there is some fundamental defect in ourselves. It is in this regard that I referred in the beginning to the exceptional characteristics of modern Japan.

## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS SITUATION

### II

#### Three Modern Problems

I said in the beginning in regard to the religious state of modern Japanese, that it has a status common to all the world. There is a deep invisible gulf between religion and modern life or the modern way of looking at things. The fundamental reason why this gulf has appeared seems to lie in the fact that science and scientific rationalism have gradually gained control of modern life. It goes without saying that, on the one hand, scientific progress has greatly contributed to mankind but, on the other hand, it has caused many serious problems. Here I should like to list only three.

#### Human Mechanization

In the first place, as is often said, human life is rapidly becoming mechanical. Mechanization does not only concern that which is outside us. It also concerns our mentality itself. The important fact about the mechanization of our lives is that the mind and its functions have become more mechanized. Human relations, including that of parent and child, brothers, friends, and other relations in the larger society contain in their nature something delicate which cannot easily be reasoned out. When one boldly cuts off such delicate and, therefore, sometimes troublesome fringes from human relations and makes of them something clear-cut and rational, by making a contract, for example, one may then feel relieved. But, when such rationalizing continues for a while, the parent is no longer a parent, the child no longer a child, the husband no longer a husband,



## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS SITUATION

and the wife no longer a wife. Their relationship, as well as they themselves, become more or less a sort of mechanism. They enter a dreary state and lose a human-like way of life. Here is the reason for the fact that all things superficially rational soon lose their appeal and cause weariness, even though they may have a strong charm at the beginning like a new machine for a child. Such a process, that is, the mechanization of man and his life, is generally called "de-humanization."

### **De-humanization**

In the second place, this fundamental de-humanization, or de-spiritualization on account of the "rationalization" of human life, paradoxically brings about a fundamental de-rationalization of human existence. The more a man is involved in a mechanized state of existence and the more his conduct and thinking become mechanical, the more the inner-most power of the mind itself becomes inert. The depth of the mind gradually ceases to function and goes out of sight. This means that a man becomes non-reflective. (Dr. Paul Tillich, the famous German theologian who is now in America, speaks of the "depth of reason.") Man's power of functioning from the "depth of reason" becomes weakened and his mind works only superficially. He may be very cheerful, healthy, bright, and light-hearted; but all the same, he is flippant, superficial and non-reflective.

The same conditions of the present age, which tend to rationalize and mechanize human life, external as well as internal, individual as well as social, rob us of the power of a rational grasp of ourselves and make us an easy prey of instinctive desires, lust for power, or other irrational motives. From behind

## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS SITUATION

our rationalized life something fundamentally irrational is apt to emerge—even frantically sometimes. “Rationalization” weakens our power of self-reflection, that is, the faculty of reason, and evokes all sorts of irrationality in its lower form.

We meet everywhere with this ironical phenomenon of de-rationalization through “rationalization,” so to speak. For example, on the streets, we often see a young man drive a motorcycle at full speed, making an amazing noise and raising a terrible dust. Yet the driver looks very triumphant and pleased with himself. Whenever I see such a young man, I wonder what he is proud of. Behind the fact that a motorcycle has been manufactured is the hard labor of technicians and scientists during the long course of history ; but the young man, himself, has not participated in any way in this effort, I am sure. Moreover, behind the invention or improvements of technicians are scientists, innumerable people of many countries, the teachers and parents, who have brought up these scientists from childhood, and the tax-payers of various countries, who have also contributed indirectly to the accomplishment of these things. I wonder if he has ever reflected on such matters. If he had done so, he would not have driven in such a manner. He might have been throwing dust on some technicians or engineers who at that very time were trying to improve the motorcycle.

Speedy driving itself is not a bad thing. The question lies rather in the egoism with which the driver indulges in his own pleasure and neglects the interests of others. When we look at him dashing by, we cannot but feel that he, himself, is a sort of machine moving together with the machine, a

## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS SITUATION

modern centaur, as it were ; and that he is being controlled without reason by only momentary feelings of pleasure and is being driven by a very simple egoism. In other words, he is de-rationalized as well as mechanized ; and the very vitality, the efficiency, and speed of the modern centaur makes us feel that there is some desolate emptiness.

This is only a small example, but I think that similar things on a much larger scale can also be found everywhere in various spheres of life, which reveal a feeling of emptiness.

### Nihilism

This feeling exists throughout the world and has something to do with my last point, which may be expressed comprehensively with the word, "nihilism." Especially in the West, many thinkers, literary men, and social critics, critics of civilization, pay keen attention to this problem. This is because nihilism lies at the very basis of modern Western civilization. It means that there has arisen a tendency to disbelief in religion—in this case, Christianity—and that a religious indifferentism is more or less widely ignoring the relationship between God and man, that has been for a long time the solid basis of all the cultural and moral civilization of the West. The problem of nihilism is connected with the fact that this very basis has begun to be shaken today.

Now nihilism does not necessarily mean the sombre, so-called "nihilistic" mood. On the contrary, it is evident in the case of the young man dashing on his motorcycle that he is vital and energetic, and that he, himself, is not "nihilistic" in the least. Actually, however, this is a case of nihilism. In



## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS SITUATION

the truest sense, nihilism must be taken up as a serious problem of the spirit. Nihilism here means that something fundamental has been lost from our existence, and that all life has become ultimately meaningless.

The mechanization of our life, the de-rationalization of our mind, and nihilism, which lies at the basis of these phenomena, are the symptoms of a critical situation commonly found throughout the world today.

*Western Concern* What we have to note here, however, is that in the West this problem has arisen in the consciousness of many people, especially religious leaders, philosophers, literary men and others, and that they are sincerely making an effort to solve it as a most serious problem imposed not only on themselves but on all mankind,—a concern which cannot yet be seen in our country.

In the West various kinds of solutions are sought. Some try to overcome nihilism by means of Christianity. For example, Kierkegaard, Dostoevski, and many theologians belong to this group. Others regard nihilism as inevitable and try to affirm life, as it is, by plumbing its depths. Nietzsche and his followers had this attitude. And still others seek in Eastern religions and philosophies a way of solving the problem. Schopenhauer and others are in this category. The literature and philosophy of Europe today are almost incomprehensible without considering this serious struggle with nihilism.

*Japanese Indifference* The situation in Japan is, however, altogether different. The mechanization of life, the de-rationali-

## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS SITUATION

zation of the mind, and nihilism are also going on rapidly in this country ; but there exist very few men of intelligence who are even aware of this as a problem, or are making any effort to solve it for themselves, not to speak of mankind in general. There seems to be neither literature nor philosophy which treats nihilism as a profound spiritual problem today. The actual state in Japan is that nihilism is always permeating our life without our being aware of it,—a fact which indicates that nihilism in Japan has its roots fastened all the more deeply in the soil. When there is no question, no answer can ever appear, and no effort can ever be expended to solve it.

What is the reason for this great difference between Europe and Japan ? In Europe, because Christianity is still living and active, and has a vital influence ; and because there has emerged a crisis in Christianity, which has produced a wholesale crisis of all the life-systems based on that religion, man is compelled to have a keen consciousness of the actuality of nihilism, and to search for a way to overcome it. The fact that such a consciousness does not arise in Japan means that our present-day religions have ceased to have any vital influence. Here we find the special situation in Japan. Many foreigners say that there is no country in the world where the people are so indifferent to religion as in Japan. Why do our religions have no vital influence today ? What must happen to them so that they can recover their vital influence, awaken us to that hidden nihilism, which is engulfing our existence, and prompt us to overcome it ?

## III

**Japanese Religions Isolated from Life**

Why are religions in Japan so ineffective today? In a word, it is because they stand isolated from our actual life. As to the manner of their isolation, however, traditional Shinto and Buddhism are different from Christianity. In today's Japan the mode of living and the way of looking at things is a mixture of the Western and the Eastern. This is the actual condition of Japanese life. The traditional religions, however, have not developed in the true sense even one step from the conditions of the past before the introduction of things Western into this country. They do not have even any surface contact with things Western which have been introduced and fused into the everyday life of Japan today. In short, they are wholly isolated from living actualities.

As for Christianity in Japan, it was and it remains a transplanation from the West. It remains, as it were, a foreign plant that exists in a hothouse. It has made few efforts to adapt itself to the new climate, though there are some exceptions such as, for example, Kanzō Uchimura.<sup>a</sup> It has no contact with and even isolates itself from the actual life of Japan and things Japanese.

In short, these religions lack any contact with actual life today. They stand in isolation from it, although they do so in different ways. Therefore, in order to recover their vital influence by correcting their isolation from the actualities of life, a different course will have to be taken by the traditional

---

a. 内村鑑三



## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS SITUATION

religions and by Christianity.

### Condition for Buddhist Recovery

Taking Buddhism as an example of the former, Buddhism is very much responsible for the fact that the emerging nihilism in the life of Japan today is unrecognized for the reason that, as was said above, "unconsciousness" lies in Buddhism's exerting no vital influence. This may be called very cynical, but the same Buddhism is in truth the only religion that took up nihilism in a wholesale manner and probed it to the depth. For example, "birth, age, sickness, and death," "all existence, is suffering," "all phenomena are transitory," and "all things have no self-identity(ego)": all these doctrines advocated by Buddhism have something to do with the problem of nihilism. It is not too much to say that from the first Buddhism looked nihilism in the face and showed the way to overcome it. Therefore, if Buddhism can recover from its present inertia, it should contribute very much to save mankind from the spiritual troubles of today.

However, the present situation of Buddhism is blocked by the very way it should take to fulfil its own calling. In the first place, because the priesthood of most Buddhist temples is nowadays transmitted by heredity, as if a man could be born a priest, or as if temples were places where men might be born. Temples are places for those who are reborn, for those who were once born in the "world" and then made up their mind to enter a new life. The decision to live in accordance with Buddhism, that is, a Buddhistic conversion (*hotsu-bodai*-

## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS SITUATION

*shin*, or *hosshin*)\* is, so to speak, the seed of religion, the source from which all religious life and religious activities spring. A tree cannot grow where there is no seed. Hence, when a temple ceases to be a place where Buddhism is practiced or preached, and becomes a place where only funerals are performed and visitors entertained, or a place for sightseeing, it is quite natural that the functions of Buddhism should gradually decline and become a sort of social custom. It is not too harsh to say that, if a reformation of Buddhist organizations is not accomplished, Buddhism will soon fade away. But as this problem has often been discussed, no further comment need be made here. The only question now is whether or not this reformation can actually be realized.

Putting aside problems related to organization and turning to problems of thought, what seems to be the most important thing for Buddhism today is that it develop from its own fundamental standpoint new religious thoughts and ideas related to the historical and social aspects of human existence. Although this aspect certainly has been the most undeveloped side of Buddhism in the past, I think that it is quite possible for it to establish a new point of view toward history and society that is quite different from that of the West. In this way, Buddhism may essentially overcome its isolation from the actualities of life. It is also, I am sure, the only way for Buddhism to accomplish its own revival. For example, one major problem is what social relations should be like and how historical life should be regarded from the Buddhist standpoint of the

---

\* *hotsu-bodaishin* 発菩提心 literally, "aspiring enlightenment"; sometimes shortened to *hosshin* 発心

## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS SITUATION

non-ego. The famous historian, Arnold Toynbee, who was in Japan some time ago, wrote a book entitled "A Historian's Approach to Religion," which has become famous because of its deep discernment. In this book he discusses in detail the idea that the non-ego concept of Mahayana Buddhism should be an indispensable factor in the future existence of mankind.

### **Condition for Christianity being Influential.**

Next, concerning Christianity in Japan, I think that it is most important for this faith to assimilate the concept or feeling that has developed in the East in connection with nature. The intimate contact with nature may be said to be the most undeveloped side of Christianity in the past. But if Christianity in Japan really succeeds, in introducing it, it will gradually come in contact also with the soil and climate of the Japanese people's mentality, get rid of the state of estrangement, and become firmly rooted in the soil of Japan. This also means the possibility of Christianity finding an occasion in this country to make a new, original development.

\* \* \* \* \*

Buddhism originated in India and was transmitted to China, where it made a new advance as Chinese Buddhism. Then it was transmitted to Japan, where it made a third new development as Japanese Buddhism, especially in the Kamakura<sup>a</sup> era. Now within this country it is encountering the West. Isn't it then natural to expect another new development to take place?

Likewise, Christianity came into existence among the Jewish

---

a.鎌倉



## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS SITUATION

people, and experienced new developments after entering the Hellenic and Roman worlds. Then it experienced another new development when it was transmitted to the Germanic people. In the present age Christianity is encountering the Orient, and a most profound and far-reaching encounter is seen within this country. Therefore, I think that it is quite natural to expect Christianity in Japan to make a bold start in another new, unprecedented development.

Both Buddhism and Christianity may get rid of the state of isolation from actual life by means of a new development of their possibilities. Then, for the first time, a way may also be open to overcome such problems as the mechanization of human life, de-rationalization, and nihilism, which are spoiling the present world.

— 終 —

**Note:** The above manuscript was transcribed from tapes loaned by the Japan Broadcasting Corporation, translated, edited, submitted to the author for correction, and then re-edited. When-ever possible expressions preferred by the author have been retained in the final draft. Editor.

# RELIGION AND MORALITY

by Professor  
Yasumasa Oshima  
Tokyo Education University



Generally speaking, religion and morality are treated together, but scientifically this combination creates a real problem. Moreover, since it is not easy to explain the logical relation between religion and morality, I shall treat the subject today from a more familiar and comprehensive viewpoint.

When a Japanese travels abroad he comes face to face with the problem of his personal religion. To get a passport he usually must fill in a space in his application papers which concerns his faith. At the hotels of Europe there is a blank in the hotel registry for the religious faith of the guests; and since Europeans dislike unbelievers and will assume that we are unbelievers if we don't make some entry, we have to write in the name of some religion.

Suppose, however, that I do not know what religion to write in. My father's tomb is in a Buddhist temple. In so far as his tomb is concerned, I may be considered to be a Buddhist, but unlike pre-war Japan, today we do not live in a society which considers the family as the basic unit. We live in a democratic society in which the individual is the basic unit. Therefore, it is dubious as to how far I can be considered to be a Buddhist.

## RELIGION AND MORALITY

When I was a pupil in the primary school, my mother was zealously devoted to Buddhism in order to heal the spiritual shock which followed the death of my father. At that time, because my mother made me, I attended Sunday school at a temple, visited the temple at the spring and autumn equinox, and listened to sermons. When I entered middle school I rapidly began to lose all interest in religion and, by the time I was a high school student, I had become completely sceptical toward all established religions. This was nihilism. Finally, I become a stranger to Buddhism and the temple.

To-day, being a professor of philosophy and morals, the problem of religion is naturally a subject with which I must wrestle as one of the problems of philosophy. However, this does not mean that I am a religious man. Moreover, being a student of the philosophy of religion, I take an interest in the metaphysical doctrines of Buddhism, but this does not mean that it is my faith.

### **Christianity : Non-church-ism**

To speak frankly, since I have been studying European thought and its history, I am strongly attracted by Christianity. In the future I may have greater interest in Buddhism, but up to now I have been concerned about Christianity. Yet even so, I cannot say that I hold the Christian faith. Christian knowledge has come to me either through the Bible or through the works of early theological thinkers such as Augustine. I have not been baptized, and do not intend to go to church.

Here in Japan we have what is called "Non-church-ism"



## RELIGION AND MORALITY

(*Mukyōkai-shugi*).<sup>a</sup> Kanzō Uchimura<sup>b</sup> (1861—1930) was its founder. However, this name does not mean non-faith in Christianity. The adherents of “Non-church-ism” are strong in faith and have a strong evangelistic zeal. In saying that I do not go to church, I do not mean to imply an interest in “Non-church-ism.” Though I am interested in Christianity, I have no faith.

In this connection we often hear the criticism that in Japan there is no religion in the true sense of the term. The Japanese people, we are told, are not religious-minded. They are religiously indifferent. Why does this criticisms arise? I think there are several reasons. One is because of the supposed relationship between religion and morals. Religion usually requires that we be conscious of a transcendent or supernatural world; whereas morality has its focus on human reason. But man does not live by reason only. Since he has passions, desires, and impulses, morality becomes a thing easy to say but hard to practice. If we try to be moral we ineffectually go round in circless. The harder we try the more keenly we feel the evil in ourselves, the desires which are irrepressible. Then at last we find that we cannot deal with ourselves by morality alone. Ultimately we require the power of love which exceeds morality or reason.

### The Buddhist Position

Here emerges religion which is different from morality: the gospel of Christ's love in the Christian religion in Europe, for

---

a. 無教会主義 b. 内村鑑三

## RELIGION AND MORALITY

example, or the Buddhist teachings of Shinran<sup>a</sup> (1173-1262) in the Kamakura<sup>b</sup> period: "Even the good are saved; why not the wicked." In the dimension of religion it is required that we be in union with the transcendent world. This is the world which is beyond the human relations of our daily moral life. In comparing Christianity and Buddhism, the former tries to embody its faith in the daily, moral life as love of one's fellowmen, while the latter tries to be released from that life.

In this respect we may say that in a certain sense Buddhism is stronger than Christianity in its religious character. For instance, we can say that the way to reach the state of union with transcendent or universal being is by means of *zazen*<sup>c</sup> ("meditation in zen") which is purer and more religious than the moral and relative character of Christianity. When we compare Buddhism with Christianity, generally speaking, Buddhism may be said to have a strong tendency to escape from this world. In other words, when it rises above morality, it finds the way of religion.

Until the Meiji era, religion existed separate from morality. I suppose this resulted from the religious character of Buddhism. It is not of such a nature that it can provide a basis for social intercourse. Escape from the temporal was the way of the virtuous priest or the priest of note, and was at the same time the objective of the faith of the common people.

However, we cannot say that all Buddhism follows this principle. In Burma and Ceylon, countries of Hinayana Buddhism, for instance, Buddhism is almost a state religion, like

---

a. 親鸞 b. 鎌倉 c. 坐禪

Shinto in Japan before the war; but in Japan where the influence of Mahayana Buddhism has dominated, to be above the world has been regarded as the purpose of the religious faith. Accordingly religion in Japan had no relation with daily life, either personal or institutional. Thus, in a certain sense, as this is the proper nature of religion, we cannot say definitely that the Japanese people are not religious-minded. An aspect of religion has been kept alive in Japan which has no relation with morality. It is above morality, and since religion in Japan has no relation with morality or daily life, the common people are not bound to adhere to any one religion. Consequently at the spring and autumn festivals they visit both Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines. But they do not care about the number of kami or sects. Our history has developed around this idea.

### Concept of Morality in Japan

Therefore, a question arises regarding the history of morality in Japan. Generally speaking, the characteristic view of the Japanese people centers in the question of the presence or lack of material value. But this is true in Europe also. For instance, when we say "good" (*yoi*)<sup>a</sup> or "bad" (*warui*),<sup>b</sup> it does not necessarily mean moral evil or goodness. We say, "Today the weather is bad (*warui*)"; "I am out of sorts (*kibun ga warui*)"<sup>c</sup>; or "I feel fine (*kibun ga yoi*)."<sup>d</sup> These are daily expressions. When Gabriel Marcel, the French existentialist philosopher, visited Japan in 1957, he also said that the French word *mal* ("bad") originally had been used in this meaning.

a. 善い (良い, 好い) b. 悪い c. 気分が悪い d. 気分が良い

It is the same in English and in German. Originally, such simple and everyday words as “good” or “bad” had no moral quality. I think this is especially the case with Japanese. For Japan is so blessed with a climate of four seasons and the Japanese people have such a wholly pleasure-seeking character, that definite moral ideas could not have originated from the natural features of this country.

### Confucian Influence

Then where did such normative or systematic morality come from? It has a Confucian Chinese origin. Though it is somewhat doubtful as to what extent Confucianism is suited to the character of the Japanese people, it made remarkable progress after the civil war of the Ōnin<sup>a</sup> era (1467—1468). Then the samurai class gained strength and the feudalistic system based on the relation between master and retainer took shape among them. And, as some morality was necessary in order to maintain such a system, Confucianism was adopted for this purpose. In the Edo<sup>b</sup> period, when the Tokugawa<sup>c</sup> government rigidly regulated the relations of master and retainer, and established the social standing of the military, agricultural, industrial and mercantile classes, as well as the parent-centered family system as the basis for the feudal system, Confucianism played an important role. Yet, although in Kyoto there was a movement under the direction of Baigan Ishida<sup>d</sup> (1685—1744) to propagate a Confucian school called *Sekimon Shingaku*<sup>e</sup> among the townsmen, it is doubtful whether Confucian ideas penetrated the moral view of the common people in the Edo period.

a. 応仁 b. 江戸 c. 徳川 d. 石田梅巖 e. 石門心学



## RELIGION AND MORALITY

For example, the monogamous system common to Western democracies was not implanted by Confucianism. The fact that there was a monogamous system in Europe was made known to us through missionary work after the introduction of the Christian religion by Francis Xavier in Kagoshima in 1549. Until that time, it was thought that an ordinary man remained monogamous only because he could not feed more than one woman. Even though the nobles and the rich had several women, they were not regarded as immoral. I think it was only after the Meiji era or rather, to speak extremely, after World War II that the idea become really established in Japan that the monogamous system is morally good.

In Europe Christianity has existed for more than fifteen hundred years and Christian moral ideas have been established in conformity with the Christian religion. Consequently, religion and morality are closely related. Because Christianity arose from Judaism, which emphasizes moral judgement, there is a strong moral principle in Christianity that Buddhism lacks. Therefore, Buddhism did not develop a systematic moral point of view. On the contrary, from the Edo period on Confucianism has provided the moral ideas of the Japanese.

### Modernization

The real problem, however, was in the post-Meiji period rather than the Edo period. In the Meiji era the feudal system was abolished and the distinction between the military, agricultural, industrial, and mercantile classes disappeared. Consequently, when Japan, with the introduction of European civilization, began to move towards modernization a new morality

## RELIGION AND MORALITY

was required to support and accelerate it.

In Europe, modernization meant that the individual had become conscious of himself as a democratic man. But we in Japan had neither the background to develop such a morality, nor sufficient time to think about it. And since a moral view could not be formed artificially and quickly like ordinary institutions, the Meiji government adopted the principle of "Japanese spirit, European learning." While introducing the institutions and techniques of Western countries, the centralized Meiji government, in order to establish a moral basis for the people, applied to the entire nation without modification the Confucianism which from the Edo period had been mainly the moral basis of the samurai class.

As we see in the Imperial Rescript on Education of 1890, the government took the family as the moral basis and tried to form a family state. In the religious field, the government made Shinto a state religion and adopted the principle of making the Shinto rites of the Imperial Family a part of the state religion. Japanese modernization may have some contradictions in the financial and other fields, but in the field of religion and morals it started by maintaining a big contradiction. This contradiction is one of the spiritual reasons why Japan was converted into a militaristic country, and was led into the Great War and finally to defeat.

### Morality and the Suppression of Christianity

Where did this contradiction come from? Shinto is a rather simple nature religion, whereas Buddhism is very "religious" but has no moral principles such as Christianity has. Rather

## RELIGION AND MORALITY

than not having them, Buddhism endeavors to keep truth aloof from moral principles. Though Christianity was introduced in the 16th century, due to suppression by the Tokugawa government it was later abandoned ; but I think this was not the only reason. We can find another reason in the excessive manner in which missionary work was carried on. It was militaristic. It rejected all culture, except Christianity, as barbarous, and it regarded other religions as superstitions or as pseudo-religions.

Christianity was introduced into this country by militaristic, Jesuit missionary methods without a full knowledge of Japanese traditions, history and national character ; and then it disappeared before a century had passed. Perhaps if it had not been abandoned, the monogamous system and other moral ideas introduced in the Edo period would have remained. All this is the remote cause of the contradiction that existed in Japan after the Meiji period.

We cannot readily say what kind of morality and religion should have been adopted after the Meiji Restoration when the new Japan set out toward modernization. As I have already stated above, a new morality can take root in a society only over a long period. It cannot be formed rapidly and artificially. The same is true of religion. Even though Western technical and material culture was introduced after the Restoration, a specified religion such as Christianity could not be forced on all the nation. Therefore, although the social system had changed, the leaders could not find a new way to guide the people.

In Europe, people have confessed the Christian religion for more than fifteen hundred years but, strange as it may seem,

this is not one and the same religion. There are many Christian denominations. Protestantism headed by Luther and Calvin arose from its opposition to the Catholic Church. Thus, the Christian church split and each division developed independently.

As Max Weber says, the Protestant movement was a prelude to the rise of modern capitalism in Europe. However, putting the discussion of this aside, I want to say that the religion of Christ split and developed in such a way that we can say that Christianity has an historical character, which was the result of Christianity's close relationship with morality, for morality itself has an historical character.

### Buddhism and Confucianism

As for Buddhism and Confucianism, it can be said that they are lacking in an historical character. As remarked above, Buddhism has a strong tendency toward detachment from the world; that is, it disregards the current of the times, whereas Christianity in Europe attached importance to "time," as can be seen, for example, in the doctrine of eschatology. In the history of the Christian Church the concept of "time" becomes a central question. In Buddhism, however, this sense of time or history is lacking. At the end of the Heian<sup>a</sup> period, the "age of decadence" (a pessimistic view which regarded the age as the days of the "Latter Law" of Buddhism, that is, *mapppō*<sup>b</sup>) was prevalent; but it was not a question of the sense of time. It was used as an expression deploring the state of the confused world. Thus, we may say that in Buddhism the sense of time or of the current of time is lacking.

---

a. 平安 b. 末法



## RELIGION AND MORALITY

Confucianism too has no moral view which can be adapted to the development of history. In the scriptures of Confucianism there are edifying words for us and the parables in them are adaptable notwithstanding the changes of history. This shows that Confucianism is based on the human way of saints or sages, with the point of view that morality does not change in the course of history but rather that it is universal beyond the current of time. Accordingly Confucianism is weak in its historical character. Its morality has no element that develops in history. In Confucianism morality is not what is found in a family, as in the case of the horizontal relations of a husband and a wife in Europe. It is found in a family vertical relationship based on ancestors. This Confucian morality, which is lacking in an historical character, is what took root in Japan.

### **Post-war Morality**

After the war the pre-war moral view based on the family unit, the view of a family-state based on the idea just stated, and the political view in which the Emperor is the father and the people are his children, collapsed completely, and Japan is now recognized as a democratic country. But in order to do this, the first steps in attaining the morality of a democratic country are to become conscious of oneself, to organize as a community, and finally to be personally and voluntarily conscious of the fundamental moral rule of such a community. If the individual and Japanese society do not do this, even though Japan has become a democratic country, we may be put under the control of a dictatorship. Therefore, in order to make

## RELIGION AND MORALITY

democracy really develop, we must establish a new moral outlook. On the assumption that we can think things out and solve questions for ourselves, we should know instinctively, voluntarily what we should we do for the better development of society.

In general we feel that morality has the influence of customs and tradition. For instance, to give moral education in a school where education is compulsory gives us the impression that traditions are being restored. The problem we confront is to create a morality suitable to a democratic society, rather than to pay respect to Japanese traditions or custom though, needless to say, we have to develop good traditions. The system of moral education, which was put in force two years ago, should be pushed towards the end of creating a morality for a democratic country. This was my aim as a principal member of the Teaching Materials Committee for Moral Education established by the Ministry of Education.

In promoting morality, however, it is necessary that it be backed by religion. There must be a religious element to sanction the creation of a new morality or to enable it to get firmly rooted, because man cannot always be tense and rely on reason only. He is agitated by passions, instincts, and impulses. Yet because the Japanese people do not hold to one religion, but live in an atmosphere in which there are many religions, this question of a religious backing is the most knotty problem we face in dealing with the question of morality or moral education in Japan. We cannot name a specific religion as necessary to back morality.

In the history of the Christian Church in Europe from the

## RELIGION AND MORALITY

end of Middle Ages, the temporal power and the Papal power were in constant strife, and generally speaking, religion became separated from the state. An exception is Denmark where the Protestant faith is the state religion and the ministers are paid by the state as government officers,—but even there Kierkegaard, originator of existentialism, attacked the state church.

In Japan, as Shinto, Buddhism, and Confucianism were protected by the state, religions became powerless and religious organizations were bound hand and foot by a feudalistic system within their own institutions. This was considered to be one of the remote reasons why religions were powerless during the recent war-confused period, and why religionists could not take the lead in the spiritual formation of new Japan. Therefore, I think the self-reform of religions is required of religionist today.

After the war freedom of belief was given to us. This means not only that we can hold any religion whatever we like, but it also signifies the necessity of establishing faith in freedom as a support for freedom of faith. After all, for the development of a democratic society the independent freedom of individuals must be taken as a basis, and a new moral point of view and faith in religion supported by our independent freedom must be established. To attain this end, religionists should regain their independence within their denominations and should reform themselves.

When I talk with foreigners, they often wonder why the Japanese intellectual class inclines to the left so easily in everything. When Mr. Koestler came of Japan, he published a statement against the attitude of the Pen Club here, which

## RELIGION AND MORALITY

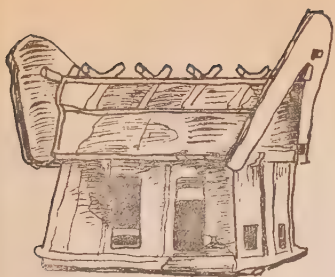
caused much trouble. I admit that Japanese intellectuals have generally been this way since the Meiji period. As Western culture was accepted they have, consciously or unconsciously, fallen into nihilistic tendencies. In consequence, it happens that they go for Marxism or anarchism. Yet I must admit that they fall into the depth of nihilistic sentiment as far as moral and religious problems are concerned. There are several causes for their fallacy, which I cannot discuss here. One of the main causes is that morality and religions in Japan have not the capacity to penetrate actively into the heart of the intellectual class.

Therefore, in Japan a new democratic morality should start now. If a new morality should be created, religions too supported by the new freedom should also start again. If these religions become the support of a new morality, then in the future, a democratic morality can take root. To this end, religions should examine themselves and reform. Religions and morality today are in a transitional period regarding such questions, and we may say that in the near future morality or religion in a the true and independent sense will be formed.

—— 終 ——

**Note:** The above manuscript was transcribed from tapes loaned by the Japan Broadcasting Corporation, translated, edited, submitted to the author for correction, and then re-edited. When-ever possible expressions preferred by the author have been retained in the final draft. Editor.





## THE PRINCIPLES OF SHRINE SHINTO

Naofusa Hirai  
Associate Professor  
Kokugakuin University

### KAMI

Let us quietly look about us at the earth on which we live. There are lovely mountains and rivers, green plains and forests. The salty breezes blowing in from oceans rich with treasures bring about a comfortable, pleasant climate. In the spring the new grass springs forth, and in the autumn the ripening of various fruits and grains is expected.

When the winds and rains, which ought to be in normal amount according to the seasons, are even slightly insufficient or overly abundant, then the earth is visited by unseasonable calamities and human life is endangered.

The traditional Japanese way of thinking is characterized by not thinking of these mysterious natural conditions as being simply nothing more than physical phenomena. Through the many thousands of years of their long life-experience, the people have come to feel that this nature surrounding them is held in some great invisible hand.

Norinaga Motoori\* (1730—1801) expresses this sense of wonder and awe at the mysteries of nature in the following two poems:\*\*

---

\* 本居宣長 Norinaga Motoori is best known by his first name, which will be used hereinafter.

\*\* *Tamaboko Hyaku-shu* (玉鉾百首)

# THE PRINCIPLES OF SHRINE SHINTO

Ayashiki wo あやしき を	To deny
Araji to yu wa あらじといふは	The existence of the mysterious
Yo no naka no 世の中	Is a foolish attitude,
Ayashiki shiranu あやしき 知らぬ	Ignorant of the mysterious
Shire-gokoro ka mo しれ 心 かも	Nature of the world itself.
Ayashiki wa あやしき は	Heaven and earth
Kore no ame-tsuchi これの 天地	Themselves are mysterious;
Ube na ube na うべな うべな	It is only natural
Kami-yo wa koto ni 神代は ことに	That the Age of the Kami
Ayashiku arikemu あやしく ありけむ	Should have been especially
	filled with mystery!

In the gradual progress of the seasons, in the motion of the sun and moon, in human happiness and unhappiness, fortune and misfortune—in all these ways of the world our ancestors apprehended the workings of some mystic, awesome, invisible power. Realizing their own indivisible relationship with this power, they sought naturally to discover a way of life. The same Norinaga puts it thus:\*

Tana-tsu-mono たな つもの	The foods we eat,
Momo no ki-kusa mo ももの 木草も	The trees and grasses,
Ama terasu 天 てらす	Are all vouchsafed
Hi no Ō-kami no 日の 大神の	Through the blessings

---

\* Ibid.

## THE PRINCIPLES OF SHRINE SHINTO

Megumi ete koso  
めぐみ 得てこそ

Of the Sun Goddess.

Ame-tsuchi no  
天 地 の  
Kami no megumi shi  
神 の めぐみ し

Without the blessings

Of the Kami

Nakariseba  
なかりせば

Of heaven and earth,

Hito-hi hito-yo mo  
一 日 一 夜 も

How could we exist

Ari ete mashi ya  
あり得て まし や

For one day, for one night?

The divine blessing partly consists in the fact of the availability of daily food, clothing, and shelter. Is not the fact that everyday life is peaceful and safe in itself a proof that man is saved?

Thus, from a humble attitude, which shows an awareness of the divine blessings in even the trivial matters of daily life, is born the spirit of Shinto in each detail of life.

The divine in Shinto is usually expressed in polytheistic terms. There are wise kami, kami of great strength, kami of rich humor. In the mountains are mountain kami, in the sea sea kami. There are philosophical and wisdom kami, as well as historical personages worshipped as kami.

Shinto does not preach a monistic god behind these kami, underlying and comprehending them. Rather, it perceives within the workings of the individual kami the "Way," the source of truth, law, and standards, which is immanent in the universe.

It is commonly said that polytheism is on a lower order than monotheism. This is an idea originating in monotheism, and

## THE PRINCIPLES OF SHRINE SHINTO

we cannot agree with it. As a renowned Christian theologian\* has said, in the world today there are no absolutely monotheistic religions. The theological problem in polytheism is the lack of unity among its deities. But, as the classical story of the divine council held in the bed of the Heavenly River (Ame-no-yasu-no-kawara)<sup>a</sup> proves, the Shinto kami are beings moving toward the definite ideal and exhibiting qualities of harmony and cooperation. Our understanding of the word "Shinto" as meaning "The Way of the Kami," "The Way revealed by the Kami," "The principles of life understood through the actions of the Kami," is predicated on the belief that the kami, that are perceived separately, are really united and harmonious in revealing the Way for men to follow and are in unison in protecting the lives of men and in assisting them in accomplishing their mission.

**The Blessings of the Kami** The workings of the kami thus speak of truth and law as the "Way" immanent in the universe and constitute the source of human life-standards. However, the kami are not merely abstract beings, but are individually endowed with divinity and respond to real prayer.

On the other hand, when we think of this in connection with the growth and unfolding of things in the world, the functioning of the kami is also spoken of as the fundamental life-force at work in the coming into being and the growth of the myriad creatures existing in the universe.

---

\* Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951) I, 225.

a. 天安之河原



## THE PRINCIPLES OF SHRINE SHINTO

This life-force, using an ancient expression, is the *musubi*,<sup>a</sup> or a vitalizing force of the two *musubi* kami :

Moro-moro no もろもろ の	The source of all
Nari-zuru moto wa なり 出る もと は	That comes into existence
Kami-musubi 神 むすび	Is the <i>musubi</i>
Taka-mi-musubi no たか みむすび の	Of the kami, Kami-musubi
Kami no musubi zo 神 の むすび ぞ	And Taka-mi-musubi.

The life of men and animals is fundamentally something imparted by the kami. In every thing in the universe a portion of this great divine life indwells ; being born, growing, and finally dissolving and becoming reduced to the original Great Life. Or when we observe the movement of the world, we notice that in personal undertakings and in the progress of common works, many times in the process leading to their completion strange occurrences, which cannot be accidental, are met with. In this we feel the activity of a mysterious power beyond our shallow human knowledge.

Through these experiences the ancestors of the Japanese, from the period of ancient Shinto, perceived the existence of this life-force, which they called *musubi*, or the power of becoming. In the wondrous surgings of the life-force, which are to be seen everywhere in the world, they had an immediate sense of the *functioning* and *blessings* of the kami.

---

a. 産霊

## WORLD VIEW

Then how has Shinto viewed this world? And how should it view it? In the classics, the creation of the land of Japan is related as the *kuni-umi*<sup>a</sup> or "land-bearing" of the two kami Izanagi<sup>b</sup> and Izanami.<sup>c</sup>

In other words, this land was not something created, but was characteristically thought of as something born of the kami, as a sacred land related by blood to the kami.

But does this mean that only the land of Japan, the islands of Yamato,<sup>d</sup> are sacred?

The ancient Japanese are said to be a mixture of racial stocks. However, after coming to this island country the migrants lived in comparative isolation from the neighboring races, and at the time of the compilation of the classical myths these islands of Yamato were their world, their universe. And although fundamentally they regarded the abode of all human life as sacred, their world-view was necessarily restricted and conditioned by their limited geographical knowledge. Consequently, the ancient Japanese regarded only the Japanese islands, that is, their own life-environment, as sacred. However, if we were to examine the ideas upheld by the classical mythology in a modern setting, we feel that it would be quite consistent with the true spirit of ancient Shinto to regard all of the world and the universe, the stage of human life, as mystical and sacred.

---

a. 国生み

b. 伊邪那岐命

c. 伊邪那美命

d. 大和島根

## VIEW OF MAN

What is man? How did he appear on this planet? What is his original nature? How are fate and death to be understood? Where are we to find the meaning of life, the value of living?

These questions, not only today, but in the future no matter how highly science develops, will remain as problems which each man must eternally face as long as man is mortal.

How, then, does Shrine Shinto try to explain these problems?

**The Nature of Man** An outstanding Shinto scholar of the Muromachi period, Urabe no Kanetomo,<sup>a</sup> said that man essentially is derived from the same source as the kami and all things. He put it thus:

That which is in the universe is called kami; that which is in all things is called spirit (*tama*)<sup>b</sup>; and that which is in man is called heart (*kokoro*).<sup>c</sup>

The same divine reality, when it appears in the universe, is called kami; when it dwells in all things it is known as "spirit," and in man, it is "heart." In other words, the human heart is a reflection of the divine.

The belief that human life is imparted by the kami has already been mentioned in connection with the *musubi* view of life. In the classical mythology we can note a belief that man is the child of the kami. This means that, not only is there latent in man a kami-related nature, but that the human

---

a. 卜部兼俱 (1435—1511)

b. 霊

c. 心

## THE PRINCIPLES OF SHRINE SHINTO

heart itself is sacred and that man may also be revered as divine.

From of old the Emperor was regarded as divine because of the belief in him as the representative of the kami, as the conveyor or transmitter of their words. In this view, we see clearly indicated the need for conscientiousness and responsibility on the part of the Emperor as the priest and leader acting under divine protection and in accordance with the divine will. But this does not mean the apotheosis of the Emperor alone.

When men embody the divine will as representatives of the kami, when they practice the Shinto ideal of a selfless life attitude, and thus show forth an example, these men are also to be revered as divine beings. The worship of historical personages such as Michizane Sugawara,<sup>a</sup> Sontoku Ninomiya<sup>b</sup> and Maresuke Nogi<sup>c</sup> as kami is based on this religious tradition.

**The Conquest of Imperfection** There is in man, born with the divine life-force, something essentially connected with the divine. If we are permitted to say that "good" is an action consonant with the functioning of growth and development, and that "evil" is its opposite, then man is born with an ability to do good.

However, while it is true that the divine essence courses through the body of man as he lives in this world, still it is difficult to say that the people in the world in general can commune directly with the divine.

---

a. 菅原道真

b. 二宮尊徳

c. 乃木希典



## THE PRINCIPLES OF SHRINE SHINTO

Rather, when we consider ourselves, we merely discover our feeble selves ever submerged in selfish feelings and ever ready to choose the easy path. The peaks of the ideal are far away and steep, and the mirror of the heart is easily beclouded.

Therefore, in order to approach the divine and to discover the will of the kami, it is necessary first to rid ourselves of bodily and spiritual pollution: thus the concept of purity comes into being. The ceremonies and practices of purification (*misogi*) and exorcism (*harai*) have their origin far back in ancient Shinto. Yet, behind the many-faceted development of these practices since the medieval period, we can perceive that the removal of the sins and pollutions of the heart through cooperation between kami and man was felt to be ever more necessary.

If a person were to polish himself and restore himself once more to the purity of heart he was born with, then truly his heart would be an "abode of the kami." It would be possible for him to experience the divine presence indwelling within his heart.

The baby, because his heart is pure, is an unlearned saint.

The saint, because his heart is pure, is a learned baby.<sup>a</sup>

These are the words of Nobuyoshi Watarai,<sup>b</sup> a Shinto scholar of the early Edo period. Was not the state of mind of returning to "a learned baby" in itself somewhat near to that of "worshipping the kami of one's heart"?<sup>c</sup>

---

a. *Yōfuku-ki* (陽復記)

b. 度会延佳

c. Kanetomo Urabe

**Human Life** What, then, is human life?

In ancient Japanese, a human generation was called by the word (*yo* 世), which also meant a segment (*yo* 節) between two knots on a bamboo plant. One generation was, in other words, the segment of life between two points like a segment on a stick of bamboo; a segment which terminates when one passes on to his offspring the baton he has received from his parents.

Shinto has been called a "religion of association." It views the individual as the point of intersection between the long vertical association from ancestors to descendants and the broad horizontal associations of the individual as a member of society. As a person, the individual may be insignificant, but nevertheless he has a responsibility as one link which must not be broken in the chain of history. He also has a mission with regard to social solidarity. This fact is connected with the meaning of life for the individual.

According to Norinaga, who interpreted the meaning of the myths recorded in the *Kojiki* and analyzed the religious view of human life of the ancient Japanese, actual human life is something in which good and bad, fortune and misfortune, alternate without a moment's cessation.

Fortune in human life does not remain forever, but is always followed by misfortune. But misfortune also does not plague us forever; it is finally dissolved, and then greater good fortune arrives. Good and bad, fortune and misfortune are like two strands woven together into a rope; they alternately appear on the surface and then disappear. However, this is not merely

a process of repetition.

Bad exists for the sake of good and has significance as an element occasioning an even greater good. In other words, bad is not absolute; good is the positive element. All things come into existence through the constant fluctuation and alternation of good and evil, fortune and misfortune. In the way that grains and plants grow to fruition in the alternation of heat and cold, warm and cool seasons, so all processes are going forward towards the ideal.

**View of History** This idea of Norinaga is carried on today as a fundamental view of human life based on the classical mythology; not only that, it has a unique flavor when considered as a view of history.

History, in its never-ending mutations, is ceaseless progress towards the ideal. The individuals in charge of each scene must, while heading for the same ideal, put forth their utmost efforts during the time allotted to them. Rather than yearning for the past or dreaming about the far-away future, to live plainly and fully in the present, the time allotted to us, must be our true mission.

This spirit appears clearly in the Imperial Edicts (*semmyō*)<sup>a</sup> of the *Shoku Nihongi*<sup>b</sup> (ca. 8th cent.) In them there appears the interesting idea of the "middle-present." (*naka-ima*)<sup>c</sup> This is a view of history which, while believing in eternal prosperity, attaches the highest value to the present age, located in the

---

a. 宣命

b. 続日本紀

c. 中今

middle between the past and the future. In later years, this spirit, living in the 14th century loyalist, Chikafusa Kitabatake,<sup>a</sup> was given further impetus.

In Shinto, there is no "end of the world," no "last day." There is only progress through endless growth and evolution, birth and development. Viewed from the standpoint of man, this means that each day is the "beginning of history," that throughout the past, present, and future, every day is the "best day"; and it is our task to make it full and complete.

**The Life-Attitude of "Sincerity"** Religion is said to aim at the ultimate solution of human problems. Human problems include the afflictions of life such as poverty, the loss of physical strength through sickness and old age, and the fear of death. They also comprehend the search for values, and the question of where to find the meaning in life which will enable us to conquer these afflictions.

One of the methods of dealing with these afflictions of life is to seek for a fundamental human life-attitude and to live consistently by it. In actual Shinto belief, this life-attitude is *makoto*,<sup>b</sup> often translated as "sincerity."

*Makoto* is a sincere approach to life with all one's heart, an approach in which nothing is shunned or treated with neglect. It stems from an awareness of the divine. It is the humble, single-minded reaction which wells up within us when we touch directly or indirectly upon the workings of the kami, know that they exist, and have the assurance of their close presence with

---

a. 北畠親房

b. まこと



## THE PRINCIPLES OF SHRINE SHINTO

us.

Then, while on the one hand we sense keenly our baseness and imperfection in the presence of the kami, on the other hand, we will be overwhelmed with ineffable joy and gratitude at the privilege of living within the harmony of nature.

While the conditions of life surrounding us remain the same, a new life-view will be born. Then, when this new life is opened before us as we have a change of heart, we will find many cases of poverty and sickness being well on the way to being righted.

The source of Shinto ethics is really in the life-attitude of *makoto*. When a person has this attitude in his contacts with others, in the case of his parents, for instance, then naturally there appears conduct which can appropriately be called by the name of the moral virtue of filial piety. Although the attitude of the individual is always the same, there appear actions suitable to be called benevolence towards children, faithfulness towards friends, loyalty towards the ruler, and love towards neighbors. Because judgements of good and evil in religious ethics vary in meaning and value with each individual and because we are emphasizing rather a dynamic life-attitude, which in itself will cause people to perform moral acts, we do not desire the forcible application of rigidly formalized virtues.

**The Ideals of Shinto** Nevertheless, Shinto does not consider that most human problems can be solved within the framework of mere individual ability. This is, for one thing, because human life is necessarily connected with society, and these solutions can in many cases be accomplished by cooperation

## THE PRINCIPLES OF SHRINE SHINTO

with such non-religious fields as medicine and social welfare work.

At this point, man is considered as an individual who is a member of the family and a member of society ; thus building—building the family, the village, the country—becomes important.

For example, speaking of building the family, it is said that in modern Western society the loss of the family ties is the greatest source of tragedy. In our country as well, the collapse of family consciousness in society is no longer merely a problem for other people.

The building of the social group, based on a new life-consciousness of gratefully receiving the divine blessings, must first begin from the reconstruction of the basic structure: the family and the village. We pray that this movement, although small at first, may eventually make Japan a land without abandoned children, without adolescent and parent-child suicides.

Furthermore the mission of Shinto does not end with building the country, that is, with the reconstruction of the land of Japan only. Since the war, the leaders of the Shrine Shinto world have chosen of their own free will the path in which Shinto can contribute to world peace and welfare. This is fully in accord with the long historical tradition of Shinto, which has always prayed for a world where the four oceans are calm.

We believe that the ultimate mission of Shinto is, through the building of the family, the village, and the country, to bring about universal peace, well-being, and prosperity for mankind, and that the kami extend their blessings and protection upon all efforts in this direction.

**View of Life and Death** There have been religions which, because of the afflictions found in life in this world, have regarded this world as a mere temporary world, and the world to come as the real world. However, Shinto has always regarded the present world as the place in which to realize the divine ideals; and consistently from great antiquity Shinto has upheld as the highest value of life the fulfillment and perfection of human life in the present world.

Man must live in as meaningful a way as possible the years of life given him in this world. This way of living is not a mere abstract teaching, but is one which has been learned effortlessly by countless simple, humble, elderly peasants in their various experiences of life. The will to labor which impels the Japanese to seek out their duties as human beings and makes them feel that it is shameful not to work,—this is rooted in this affirmative attitude to reality and has been one of the motive forces in the reconstruction of Japan.

The Shintoist is impelled to continue his diligent building for the sake of raising the cultural level of his fellowmen, and for the sake of a better tomorrow. The ideals which could not be attained by him in this generation will be realized by his descendants and successors. Even after we die, we will protect the lives of those who follow after us in order to realize these ideals. In this consists Shinto's view of life and death.

Umare konu

生れ 来ぬ

Saki mo umarete

先 も 生れて

Sumeru yo mo

住める 世 も

Before birth,

After birth, and living here

In this world,

## THE PRINCIPLES OF SHRINE SHINTO

Shinite mo kami no  
死にて も 神 の  
Futokoro no uchi<sup>a</sup>  
ふところ の うち

And after death—all is  
Within the Divine bosom.

Receiving life from the kami, we enter into this world; then dying we go again to the bosom of the kami. Is this not like rising with the sun and going to sleep at sunset?

## SHRINES AND FESTIVALS

It is with these principles as their background that Shinto shrines are maintained and their festivals celebrated. The shrine is a symbol of the presence of the kami and a place of individual prayer, as well as the spiritual homeland of the community.

The festival (*matsuri*)<sup>b</sup> begins with the purification of the mirror of the heart, and becomes an opportunity of renewing one's awareness of the boundless significance of the privilege of living in the world of man through the realization of the divine will, and through the reporting of its accomplishment.

Prayer at the shrines of the kami and participation in the festivals are the disciplines of religious faith. Is not the proper realm of the activities of Shrine Shinto, in the last analysis, the problem of a way of life for man as he seriously considers human life?

— 終 —

---

a. Mitsuyoshi Tachibana (橘 三喜) (1635—1703)

b. まつり



# SOKA GAKKAI AND THE NICHIREN SHO SECT (1)



— An Institute Study —

## INTRODUCTION

Among numerous unique religious organizations that have come to the attention of the public since World War II, none are more in the limelight today than Sōka Gakkai.<sup>a</sup> Its ability to attract members of labor unions, particularly coal miners, has posed a serious threat to union leadership and solidarity. Its success in politics, as indicated by the election of all 76 of its candidates for ward assemblies in Tokyo in April 30, 1958, and all six of its candidates to the House of Councillors of the National Diet on June 2, 1959, made it a focus of national attention. Its astounding program to “take over” the religious life of the nation has shocked many. But the major cause of anxiety and the reason why opposition is beginning to be aroused is the aggressive propaganda method that has brought it into conflict with practically every other religious organization in the country.

This method is called *shaku-buku*<sup>b</sup> in Japanese, a term that means, literally, “to destroy and conquer.” The term occurred originally in the Shōman-gyō,<sup>c</sup> Dainichi-kyō,<sup>d</sup> and other ancient Buddhist scriptures in connection with a parallel term, *shōju*<sup>e</sup>

a. 創価学会 b. 折伏 c. 勝鬘經 d. 大日經 e. 摂受

## SOKA GAKKAI AND THE NICHIREN SHO SECT

which means, literally, "acceptance." The former term designates intolerant propaganda to produce a forced conversion; the latter a tolerant approach by means of moral suasion. In his writings Nichiren stressed that with *ignorant* men tolerant, moral suasion could be used; but that with *malicious* men it was necessary to use intolerant methods.

The term *shaku-buku* was of great significance in the history of Nichiren propaganda even before it was adopted by Sōka Gakkai as its instrument for advance. In 1951 Jōsei Toda<sup>a</sup> organized his followers into a military system, trained them in its refined pressure techniques, and sent them into society with a commission to compel both the willing and unwilling to be converted. These "troops," mostly young men and women, "gang up" on an individual, force him to submit to a type of "brain washing," and put every conceivable kind of pressure on him until he succumbs. Once committed the individual must destroy the traditional home altar and substitute one approved by Sōka Gakkai. Then he is incorporated into a group which exercises a type of surveillance which generally prevents any relapse into the former religious life.

As might be expected, the numerical growth of the organization has been remarkable. In 1953 its reported membership was some 53,000 households, roughly 200,000 individuals. In 1959 it claimed a total of 1,096,920 or an estimated 4,000,000 persons! This is an astounding record. It alone would appear to justify the careful attention that religious, political, and social leaders are beginning to give to it.

It is not our purpose at this time to present a thorough study

a. 戸田城聖

of Sōka Gakkai. In this article we are presenting only some brief background information regarding the founder and his successor; his fundamental philosophy, as stated in "The Theory of Value,"<sup>a</sup> which gave the organization its name; and a resume of the Nichiren Shō Sect<sup>b</sup> with which Sōka Gakkai is affiliated. An outline of Jōsei Toda's *Teaching of Shaku-bu<sup>ku</sup>*,<sup>c</sup> and a study of Sōka Gakkai itself will be presented in a subsequent issue.

## I

## The Founder and his Successors

## FOUNDER

Tsunesaburō Makiguchi,<sup>d</sup> founder of the Sōka Gakkai, was born in 1871 in Arahama, Kariha-gun, Niigata Prefecture, the eldest son of Chōmatsu Watanabe.<sup>e</sup> When he was three years old he was adopted by the Makiguchi family and became its legal heir. After finishing his elementary education he went first to Otaru in Hokkaidō, where an uncle lived, and then to Sapporo, where he graduated from the Sapporo Normal School and then remained there for some years as a teacher.

In those years Makiguchi was especially interested in geography and in 1901 he went to Tokyo to publish the results of his studies: a book entitled *The Geograph'y of Life (Jinsei Chirigaku)*.<sup>f</sup> Success in this venture led him into the publishing business and at one time he assisted in the compilation of a Ministry of Education-sponsored national textbook on geo-

a. 価値論 b. 日蓮正宗 c. 折伏教典 d. 牧口常三郎 e. 渡辺長松 f. 人生地理学

## SOKA GAKKAI AND THE NICHIREN SHO SECT

graphy. However, at the age of thirty-nine for financial reasons he again became a teacher and for twenty years devoted himself to this profession, becoming in time the principal of several of Tokyo's elementary schools.

At the same time he devoted his energy to the study of pedagogy and in June, 1930, he began to publish a series of books entitled *A System of Education based on the Value-Creation Principle* (*Sōka Kyōikugaku Taikei*),<sup>a</sup> in which he propounded his theory of value that was to become the philosophical foundation for his later activities. In this he was helped by his subordinate, Mr. Jōsei Toda, who after Makiguchi's death became his successor.

In 1937 at a meeting held in the Kikusui restaurant in Azabu, Tokyo, Makiguchi and Toda established the Value-Creation Education Institute (*Sōka Kyōiku Gakkai*)<sup>b</sup> and became respectively president and chairman of the board of directors. Four years later (1941) they began publication of a new magazine entitled *The Creation of Value* (*Kachi Sōzō*):<sup>c</sup>

In the meantime about 1928 Makiguchi, at the age of fifty-eight along with his protege, Toda, fell under the influence of Sokei Mitani,<sup>d</sup> principal of the Mejiro Elementary School and became drawn to the teaching of the Nichiren Shō Sect. Henceforth, he taught that his "Theory of Value" was in accord with the teaching of its head temple, Taiseikiji.<sup>e</sup> Thus, his philosophy of education was linked with an intense religious faith. It was the latter that was to be the vehicle for the realization of his philosophy.

Makiguchi had only a small group of earnest followers. He

a. 創価教育学体系 b. 創価教育学会 c. 価値創造 d. 三谷素啓 e. 大石寺



## SOKA GAKKAI AND THE NICHIREN SHO SECT

achieved no national reputation. Nevertheless, as the years passed, opposition to his activities began to develop because of the political implication of his teaching and conduct, and finally he was forced to resign his position as principal. In May, 1942, his magazine was suppressed. The following year on July 6, 1943, Makiguchi and Toda were arrested on charges of lese majesty and subsequently twenty-one leading followers were also incarcerated. In view of the tense international situation this was not strange. Makiguchi had ordered his followers not to accept the talisman (*taiima*)<sup>a</sup> of the Grand Shrine of Ise and had prohibited them from worshipping the shrine because he said it was counter to the teaching of the Nichiren Shō Sect. Even though the sect officials, fearing repression by the authorities, sought to restrain the organization and ordered the members not to reject the talisman, Makiguchi and his followers maintained that it did no good to pray to the Sun Goddess and ignored the admonition of the sect leaders.

In November 18, 1944, at the age of 74, Makiguchi died in his solitary prison cell at Sugamo prison.

### JOSEI TODA

Jōsei Toda, the second head of Sōka Gakkai, was born in Ishikawa Prefecture in 1900, and as a young man became a elementary school teacher in Hokkaido. Later, while he was teaching under Makiguchi at the Nishimachi primary school in Tokyo, he became an adherent of Nichiren Shō Sect (1928) and was closely associated with Machiguchi until the latter's

---

a. 大麻

death in prison in 1944.

Soon after his release from prison in July, 1945, Toda, in accordance with Makiguchi's expressed wish, reorganized their followers. In February, 1946, the present name was adopted, and in November, the first general meeting was held at the Education Hall (Kyōiku Kaikan)<sup>a</sup> in Kanda on the third anniversary of Makiguchi's death. In July, 1949, the monthly magazine, *Dai Byaku Renge*,<sup>b</sup> and in April, 1951, the weekly paper, *Seikyō Shinbun*<sup>c</sup> were started. During those years, however, Toda had many difficulties and the future was uncertain.

From May, 1951, the situation changed. Toda assumed the presidency of the organization and inaugurated a program of advance by means of forced conversions (*shaku-buku*). His success in this is well-known. When he died on April 22, 1958, several hundred thousand people, some from distant places, paid tribute at the Aoyama Funeral Hall in Tokyo. Among them was Prime Minister, Nobusuke Kishi,<sup>d</sup> and Education Minister, Tō Matsunaga,<sup>e</sup> who's interests were primarily political, since neither of them are devotees of the movement.

(The present head of the organization is Takashi Koizumi,<sup>f</sup> the chief director)

## II

### NICHIREN SHO SECT

The Nichiren Shō Sect with which Sōka Gakkai is now closely affiliated is, as the name suggests, a division of Nichiren Buddhism that was founded by Saint Nichiren<sup>g</sup> (1222–1282).

a. 教育会館 b. 大白蓮華 c. 聖教新聞 d. 岸信介 e. 松永東 f. 小泉隆 g. 日蓮

## SOKA GAKKAI AND THE NICHIREN SHO SECT

Saint Nichiren was born in a small fishing village not far from the present Kominato in Chiba Prefecture. When he was twelve years of age he entered the neighboring Tendai monastery of Kiyozumi,<sup>a</sup> which today is called Tanjōji<sup>b</sup> (literally, "birth-temple") in honor of his birth there. Later he went to Kamakura to learn about Pure Land (*Jōdo*)<sup>c</sup> Buddhism and then on to Enryakuji<sup>d</sup> on Mount Hiei<sup>e</sup> near Kyoto where he studied the teaching of Dengyō Daishi<sup>f</sup> ("great teacher"), otherwise known as Saichō.<sup>g</sup> During this latter period, he went to Kyoto, Nara, Osaka and Mt. Kōya<sup>h</sup> and studied various other Buddhist teachings.

Convinced that the quintessence of Buddhism was to be found only in the Lotus Sūtra (*Saddharma-pundarika-sutra*), he returned to his native village and announced a new formula for the salvation of all mankind: *Namu Myōhō-rence-kyō*<sup>i</sup> ("Adoration be to the Lotus of the Perfect Truth!") This summed up his faith and has since been the identifying characteristic of his followers who incessantly beat a fan-like hand drum and repeat the "Great Title" (Daimoku)<sup>j</sup> as the above expression is called. At the same time he virulently attacked all other Buddhist schools of thought—Pure Land, Shingon, and Zen—as heresies. Consequently he became *persona non grata* with civil and religious leaders and was severely persecuted by both.

Nichiren was intensely devoted to both the Lotus Sutra and his native land. He believed that Japan was destined to become the center from which the teachings of the Buddha would spread throughout the world, and that he as the descendant of the

a. 清澄 b. 誕生寺 c. 浄土 d. 延暦寺 e. 比叡 f. 伝教大師 g. 最澄  
h. 高野 i. 南無妙法蓮華經 j. 題目

Bodhisattva Visista-caritra (Jōgyō Bosatsu)<sup>a</sup> was the one who was destined to bring this to pass in the decadent age of the Latter Law (*mappō*).<sup>b</sup> He attacked his opponents with an intensity unparalleled in Japanese history. He spared none from the Emperor down who would not listen to and follow his message. As the center for his world-wide mission he chose Mount Minobu<sup>c</sup> in Yamanashi Prefecture in the region of Mount Fuji. There he spent more than eight years just prior to his death, and it is there that his ashes rest.

In addition to a surprising quantity of expository and polemic writing, Nichiren left as his greatest legacy to his followers a *mandala*, that is, a diagrammatic representation of the cosmos which became the central object of worship as well as the center of controversy for his followers.

At the time of the founder's demise in 1282 there were six leading disciples from among whom Nichiren appears to have been unable to select one as his successor. Instead, he willed that responsibility for leadership, including the custodianship of the temple at Minobu, should rotate among them—an arrangement that soon proved to be very impractical. Consequently, it was decided that one of them should be chosen for this position and Nikō<sup>d</sup> was selected. However, Nikkō<sup>e</sup> another one of the six, believing that he was the rightful spiritual heir, was dissatisfied and moved to Taisekigahara<sup>f</sup> at the foot of Mount Fuji where he established his own temple, Taisekiji.

Nikkō (1246—1333) became a disciple of Nichiren at the age of fourteen and when Nichiren was exiled to the island of Sado<sup>g</sup> in Niigata Prefecture, he followed his master there and

a. 上行菩薩 b. 末法 c. 身延 d. 日向 e. 日興 f. 大石原 g. 佐渡

## SOKA GAKKAI AND THE NICHIREN SHO SECT

led a very hard life with him for three years. Later he followed Nichiren to the seclusion of Mount Minobu, and endeavored to propagate the faith in the surrounding area. It is believed that it was upon Nikkō's advice that Nichiren chose Mount Minobu after his return from exile on Sado. At any rate his followers have continued to regard him and his successors as the only true succession of Saint Nichiren.

Nikkō's followers have never cooperated with other Nichiren bodies. On the contrary, for the past seven hundred years they have carried on a bitter struggle against them, as the arch heretics of the faith. In the vitriolic quality of their attacks, they unquestionably have emulated Saint Nichiren. And in their refusal to pay obeisance to shrines they are in accord with his spirit, if not his practice. Nikkō would not permit the local feudal lord to visit Mishima<sup>a</sup> Shrine nor make an image of Sakyamuni for the purpose of worship.

The division between Nikkō and the other five disciples of Nichiren was much more than a personal feud. It was also doctrinal. Nikkō believed that his interpretation of the Master's teachings was the only one. What these were is a historical problem that need not detain us here. The present doctrines of the Nichiren Shō Sect were reorganized by Nikkan<sup>b</sup> (1665—1726) in the Tokugawa period and it is these that are the basis of Sōka Gakkai's teachings today.

There are four basic differences that separate Nichiren Shō devotees from other Nichiren believers. In the first place, the Nichiren Sect, established by the five disciples, and its subsequent divisions, regard the historic Buddha, Sakyamuni, as the

---

a. 三島 b. 日寛



Eternal Buddha, and Saint Nichiren as in the true line of succession from him. The Nichiren Shō Sect, however, ignores the historic Buddha, Sakyamuni, and equates Nichiren, as Jōgyō Bosatsu, directly with the eternal Buddha. This is the basic difference between the two.

In the second place, although the central object of worship in all Nichiren temples is a *mandala* either received from or copied after those drawn by Saint Nichiren, Taisekiji regards its *mandala* as the only true one and, therefore, the only one that is efficacious for the salvation of mankind.

In the third place, Taisekiji claims that Nikkō received one of Nichiren's teeth with a small piece of live flesh attached. Subsequently, the flesh is said to have begun to grow imperceptibly and the devout believe that today the flesh almost covers the entire tooth, which is now reported to be in the possession of Taisekiji. Leaders of the sect say that when the flesh completely covers the tooth, the sect will reach its greatest position of influence.

Finally, the Nichiren Shō Sect has as its ultimate goal the establishment of government-sponsored ordination center at Taisekiji. When this happens the sect will then have become the state religion.

Until the end of World War II the Nichiren Shō Sect was not strong numerically. About 1920, for example, it had only 69 temples and some 66,000 adherents. By 1946, however, the sect reported 135 temples and 128,500 adherents. It would seem that in spite of wartime difficulties Makiguchi and his Sōka Gakkai, which was established in 1937, contributed greatly to its growth. By 1957 (December 31) the number of temples

## SOKA GAKKAI AND THE NICHIREN SHO SECT

(141) and churches (17) showed no marked increase but the reported number of adherents was 413,350 !\*

\* Obviously membership in Sōka Gakkai does not automatically make a person an adherent of the Nichiren Shō Sect.

### III

## A Brief Summary of THE THEORY OF VALUE

By

*Tsunesaburo Makiguchi*

*Revised by Josei Toda*

### I. GOAL OF LIFE

The goal of human life is happiness, the ideal state for each individual. Between unhappiness and the ideal state of happiness there are many stages.

A happy life is the condition in which whatever is regarded as having Value is realized. The question of Value, therefore, is of prime importance, not only for determining the goal of life, but also as the criterion by which each individual is able to break away from whatever his state of misery may be and move toward the attainment of happiness.

### II. TRUTH AND VALUE

Truth and value are two very different concepts. Truth is based on cognition and is a statement regarding reality as it is. Falsehood, the opposite of truth, is an incorrect statement about reality, which asserts that reality is what it is not.

Value is determined by the relationship which man has

with something. That which does not concern man, things that are not known by him to exist, are not heeded or regarded as of importance to him. That which affects man's life, no matter how small, enters his consciousness and is recognized as having a relationship with man.

Truth and falsehood have no relationship with the relativity of human existence. It is impossible to deny that truth is true and that falsehood is false. Value is a statement of how a person reacts to that with which there exists some relationship ; for example, a thing may be thought to be beautiful or ugly, useful or useless, agreeable or disagreeable. Historically, philosophers have regarded the principal elements of the ideal life to be truth, goodness and beauty. This is incorrect. To be sure, goodness and beauty describe a relationship between man and an object. Therefore, they come within the category of Value, but this is not the case with truth. The state of anything being true or false depends on the objective cognition of reality, not on its subjective evaluation.

### III. THE IMPORTANCE OF VALUE

In order to reach the goal of life, that is, ideal happiness, man seeks after that which has Value. In doing so it is inconceivable that he would disregard Value which is inherent in advantage, benefit, profit, convenience, in other words, gain or economic value. It is not surprising that this phase of happiness, especially gain or economic value, cannot be ignored. Yet, strange as it may seem, philosophers generally have seldom, if ever, regarded it as an integral part of happiness and included it in the criteria for happiness. Consequently, their principles

## SOKA GAKKAI AND THE NICHIREN SHO SECT

are academic and remote from the actualities of life.

The Principle of Value makes the basic ingredients of happiness : gain, goodness and beauty. This alone is a trustworthy standard for determining the ideal life. In this connection, beauty or aesthetic value describes the momentary value which has an emotional quality derived from our five senses. Essentially it is what one likes or dislikes. Likewise, gain or economic value, that is, profit, refers to the quality of being able to support and prolong the life of an individual in a way that beauty cannot. Goodness or moral value is the term that is applied to the volitional actions of an individual that contribute in any way to the development of the community of which he is a constituent member. This corresponds to what is called public welfare. The opposites of these three are respectively ugliness, loss, and evil.

A volitional action is regarded by the individual as either gain or loss, depending upon whether or not the community of which he is a member considers it to be good or evil, right or wrong. Consequently, an action that is destructive from the community point of view is never regarded by the individual as profitable. Moreover, that which is regarded highly in ones own community may be considered as evil in another. This is as true in regard to nations, societies, classes and groups as it is for the individual, in which case, the criterion of value is gain or loss, not good or evil.

### IV. THE DISTINCTIVE QUALITY OF VALUE

The feeling of attraction or repulsion which is produced when a relationship has been established between an individual and

## SOKA GAKKAI AND THE NICHIREN SHO SECT

an object is the sense of Value. Many factors, such as intensity, duration, certainty and uncertainty, proximity and remoteness, determine the effect of any relationship upon the individual. One person may consider a flower to be beautiful, another think it disagreeable, and a third be indifferent to it. Even though the responses may be similar, the degree will vary. If three persons receive a gift of some rice, one may shed tears of gratitude, a second may be less grateful, and a third resent the kindness. This applies to any "good" action.

Moreover, the effect of anything on an individual will vary greatly with time and place. An object may be thought beautiful or profitable at one time and ugly or unprofitable at another. As a flower fades, so the thing itself, anything, may change and create different impressions on the mind. Value is a concept concerning change. There are innumerable changes in Value as regards gain and loss, or good and evil. In the field of economic value, for example, consider the case of two men, one of whom sells an article at \$10,000 profit, while another in the same situation sustains a loss of \$1,000. The former is called a gainer, the latter a loser. Or take one worker who earns a hundred dollars, while another earns none. The latter in any event will feel that he has suffered a loss. Or, again, if one person gains \$200 and another only \$100, the latter will feel that he has lost in his bargain. Such is the nature of human life.

## V. THE STANDARDS OF VALUATION

Realization of an ideal state of life is possible if the following standards are observed.



## SOKA GAKKAI AND THE NICHIREN SHO SECT

1. *Beauty and ugliness*: They are fools who, moved by likes and dislikes, disregard gain and loss, not to speak of good and evil.
2. *Gain and loss*: They are also fools who, blinded by the desire for quick gain, neglect a greater gain.
3. *Good and evil*: A bad man is one who, tempted by private profit, ignores the public good.
4. *Good and evil*: To do no good is to do evil. Doing no evil is doing good. This is at the lowest level, but nonetheless these are very good and very evil.
5. *Major good and major evil*: A moderate or small good becomes a great good. A moderate or small evil, when opposed to a major evil, becomes a major good.
6. *Highest good and highest evil*: The degree of good and evil depends on social position. The higher the social position, the greater a person's social influence. Thus, an evil action by one in the highest social position in the long run will be regarded as the highest evil, even though it is small. The reverse is true if the action is good.
7. *Empty good and empty evil*: Good and evil in disregard of gain and loss are empty, and are impossible of attainment. Disregarding one's personal interest and serving the public is empty good.
8. *Truth and falsehood*: Truth is the awareness of reality as it is. Value means the relationship which man has with something; so truth is not a factor in happiness.
9. *Right and wrong*: The category of right and wrong is different from that of good and evil. For bad men, evil is regarded as right and good as wrong; for a crooked

person, honesty is regarded as viciousness.

10. *Half-crazed-personality*; They are crazy who cannot understand such a simple reason as mentioned above; and they are half-crazy who do not follow it, though they understand it.

## VI. THE ABSOLUTE HAPPINESS

The material world and human life must be probed to their depths in order to clarify the real nature of Value. Value is the relationship existing between subject and object. Although scientific investigation of the objective, or material world has developed, the problem of "life," that is, the subjective or spiritual world, is or seems to be unrevealed as it is. Life is the key-point of happiness. If the power of life is weak, the value of beauty or gain cannot be realized, much less the value of good, that is, public service. Religious organizations, which should be largely responsible for the solution of this problem, have very largely degenerated into being mere undertakers. Thus, the question remains unsettled; but this does not mean that there is no solution. The essence of Buddhism, probed deep into the innermost mysteries of this subject, and an explanation was made plain long ago by Sakyamuni in the Lotus Sutra and by the T'ient'ai, the great teacher of China, in his doctrine of "three thousand Worlds in one mind." (*ichinen sanzen*)<sup>a</sup> Moreover, the practical method for attaining the ideal state of happiness was manifested supremely by Saint Nichiren, the first Enlightened One, and now the very source of faith and peace of mind really exists at Taiseikiji, the head temple of the Nichiren Shō Sect at the foot of Mount Fuji.

---

a. 一念三千

## REVIEWS

### Japan, Before Buddhism.

By J. Edward Kidder, Jr.

London: Thames and Hudson, 1959. Vol. 10 of *Ancient Peoples and Places*, edited by Dr. Glyn Daniel. 282 pp.

Remarkable advances have been made, since the end of the Pacific War, in almost every field of Japanese humanistic study. But advance in the investigation of economic, social and religious life in Japan before the introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century A.D. has been truly exciting. The forward leap has come, in part, from the rise of a more critical attitude toward the eighth-century histories—particularly toward the myths in the *Nihongi* and the *Kojiki*. But, in addition, extensive archaeological work at “pre-historic” sites all over Japan has given us a mass of new, reliable evidence that is certain to deepen our understanding of Japanese life in periods when the state was being formed and when some of the more fundamental features of Japanese culture were

beginning to appear. Thus the Western student can not but be enthusiastic about *Japan, Before Buddhism*, a book that has been written by a trained archaeologist and that provides a competent summary of recent archaeological findings. The book is divided into four chapters—one for each of the four major pre-Buddhist periods: paleolithic (pre-pottery); neolithic (Jomon); bronze-iron (Yayoi); and proto-historic (burial tombs). In each chapter the archaeological data for that period is presented topically, with emphasis being given to pottery, tools and burial practices. More than one hundred excellent illustrations are included, and these have been tied closely to the text. For the student who wishes to probe more deeply into particular subjects the author has appended a selective

## REVIEWS

list of Japanese and English publications.

In addition to writing a readable, accurate summary of archaeological data, Dr. Kidder draws a few conclusions about the connection between technological improvements and certain spurts of economic growth. He has given us a better appreciation, for example, of the importance of the introduction of wet-rice agriculture, and of the introduction and use of iron and horses. But in the more complex area of social relationships and religious beliefs he is more reticent. It may be too early to attempt analyses, on the basis of better evidence, about the process of social and religious change in those early centuries. But a number of Japanese scholars are devising some meaningful patterns. In primitive religion, for instance, excellent contributions are being made by Toshiaki Harada, Minoru Shibata, Ichiro Hori, Harukuni Miyaji, Komazo Mizoguchi, Takashi Saito, Iwao Oba, Yasu-

hiko Matsumae and others. Thus, it is to be hoped that Dr. Kidder's distinguished study will soon be followed by analyses and interpretations which will give us an even clearer insight into Japanese life in that formative, pre-Buddhist age.

DELMER M. BROWN

University of California, Berkeley

\* \* \* \* \*

### JAPAN, BEFORE BUDDHISM

J. Edward Kidder

- I The Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Periods
- II The Neolithic Period  
The sites, food supplies, tools and pottery, customs and symbols, and neolithic man.
- III The Bronze-Iron Age  
Rice-growing communities, burial methods, bronze equipment, the pottery, customs and religious practices.
- IV The Protohistoric Period  
The communities, iron, the tombs, the contents of tombs, the tomb sculptures, the shrines.

## REVIEWS

### Protestant Beginnings in Japan

By Winburn T. Thomas 258pp.

### A Century of Protestant Christianity in Japan

By Charles W. Iglehart 384pp.

Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1959

It is very appropriate that two books on the history of Japanese Protestantism were published in the year of 1959, when the celebration of the Protestant Centenary was held in Tokyo.

The first book *Protestant Beginnings in Japan* by Dr. W. T. Thomas covers the first three decades, 1859—1889. The author came to Japan as a missionary in 1933 and stayed here about eight years. This book is his Ph. D. dissertation submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School of Yale University. His main purpose in this monograph is to search out the reasons for both the rapid growth of Protestantism in Japan after 1883 and the recession after 1889. Among other things he finds the direct cause of the rapid expansion in the importuning of the Western powers to grant more favorable treaty terms to Japan, and the direct cause of

the recession in Japan's failure in the treaty revision negotiations. I think his analysis is on the whole good, but I cannot say that it is particularly original. Any intelligent Japanese knew this; only he did not say so openly,

My comments upon this book can be condensed into three points. First, it gives Japanese the impression that it is a story of American missionaries. It is written from the point of view of an American missionary for American readers. It never penetrates deep into the background of the whole historical process, so as to disclose what was going on intricately in the mind of Japanese people at that time. It may be too much to ask that such an investigation be made by an American who lived only eight years in Japan. I urgently feel that the time has come when some Japanese ought to write a



history of Japanese Protestantism in English. Second, the knowledge of the author is on the whole correct, but his view of the field is too much limited to the work of the Congregational Church in Japan. He should have had a wider outlook and studied the movements of other churches as well. When he treats the social welfare activities in Chapter VI, for example, he does not mention St. Luke's Hospital in Tokyo. And in Chapter IV, in writing about Education, he makes the statement that St. Paul's school was conducted jointly by the English and American Episcopal societies after 1889. But to my knowledge, St. Paul's school never had anything to do with any English church societies. Third, it is a minor matter, but since the author gives a list of Japanese words which are useful for those who want to know the history of the Japanese church but do not have any knowledge of the Japanese language, I would like to suggest that he add one more word to his list. That is, *Fujin Dendoshi*, the literal English translation of which will be "women evangelists."

The second book *A Century of Protestant Christianity in Japan* by Dr. Charles W. Iglehart is an excellent book, lucid and interesting to read. The author, who lived in Japan nearly forty years, really knows Japan. This book is, according to the author's own words, offered for non-professional readers as a brief survey of the history of Protestantism in Japan. However, it is extremely valuable especially for those who desire to know the situation of the Japanese church just before and during World War II. This is a dark spot in the history of the Japanese church; and there are many delicate problems hidden beneath, so that it is very difficult for us Japanese to touch this spot. Dr. Iglehart's way of treating this period is cautious and sympathetic, but also accurate. We cannot help but admire his manner of writing. Quite recently I was asked to write an article on church unity during the war period in Japan; but I had a hard time finding any source materials, because almost all of them were gone, I mean burnt up in the air raids. Therefore, this book by Dr. Igle-

## REVIEWS

hart was the only source upon which I could rely, while I was writing the article. I hope it will not be impolite, if I take this opportunity to acknowledge this here.

Finally, if I am allowed to give my own reaction after reading these two books, I must confess that almost all the books on the history of Christianity in Japan written by foreigners so far, do not go deep by enough into the trends of theological thought in Japan. So here again I wait patiently for the emergence of a history of Japanese Protestant thought written by a Japanese in English.

ENKICHI KAN

Saint Paul's University, Tokyo

\* \* \* \* \*

### PROTESTANT BEGINNINGS IN JAPAN

Winburn T. Thomas

#### Part One: Japan in the Mid- Nineteenth Century

I The Religious Situation

II The Social Situation

#### Part Two: The First Three Decades

III Christianity Re-enters Japan

IV Education

V Literature

VI Social Welfare Activities

VII The Churches and Evangelism

#### Part Three: Rapid Growth then Retardation

VIII Reasons for the Spectacular  
Growth, 1883—89

IX Growth Retarded by Resur-  
gent Nationalism

X Conclusion

\* \* \* \* \*

### A CENTURY OF PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY IN JAPAN

Charles W. Iglehart

I The Old Japan

Soil and Climate for Protes-  
tant Christianity

II Coming into Modern Life  
1853—1882

Protestant Beginnings

III A Growing Modern Nation-  
State 1881—1909

The Church in Modern Society

IV Expansion to Empire 1909—  
1937

The Church Under Respon-  
sibility

V Total War, Defeat, Occupa-  
tion 1937—1952

The Church Under the Cross

VI Renewal and Advance 1952—  
1959

Japanese Christianity Faces  
the Future

## The Soto Approach to Zen

By *Reiho Masunaga*

*Tokyo, Layman Buddhist Society Press*  
(*Zaike Bukkyo Kyokai* 1958.) pp. 215

Dear Professor Masunaga :

I hope everything goes well with you and your work in 1960.

This evening I have re-read your last work, "The Sôtô Approach to Zen," and as one of your best friends, I should like to give you my opinion regarding it. This is not easy, because I feel that I must be critical; but in the interest of scholarship and a better understanding of our common goal, I feel that you will fully understand my attitude.

I deeply appreciate your idea of introducing to the English-reading public the Sôtô "School," which is the most prominent branch of Zen Buddhism in Japan. As we all know, there were five schools and seven branches of Zen Buddhism in China, of which only three were introduced into Japan: the Rinzai, Sôtô, and Ôbaku. These have developed well in our country and two have flourished. Even today they are prosperous.

However, of these three, only the Rinzai school has been introduced to the Western world. Apparently in the expectation that it is something new and wonderful, it has become a subject of absorbing interest there. Thus the Sôtô school, although the most prominent in our country, has been neglected and even now is not known in the West. This is unfortunate. Something should be done about it. Therefore, you have written "The Sôtô Approach to Zen," which is indeed well-timed. This is very commendable on your part, and all your friends are grateful for your effort; but I regret to say that I do not think that you have been entirely successful.

In this connection we must bear in mind what Dr. Daisetsu Suzuki has done for the Rinzai School of Zen Buddhism. He could do this because he has a fluent command of English, and has demonstrated his ability to read the innermost

## REVIEWS

thoughts of Western people. Moreover, he has displayed the sense and sensibility of a great journalist. Even though Dr. Suzuki has represented only the Rinzai side, but for his ability and life-long effort, the Western world would have had no contact at all with or interest in Zen Buddhism.

Your idea of making up for this neglect of the Sōtō by presenting a clear and concise explanation of Zen Buddhism for Western people is, as I have said, highly commendable, and I would be only too pleased if your efforts had been crowned with success. But to realize your idea you must overcome many more mountains and valleys that lie ahead. You must improve your command of English; you should be able to read the Western mind better, and you should try to find more adequate expressions for certain special terms. I recognize these difficulties because they are not only yours, they are also mine.

May greater success attend your

next publication.

Sincerely yours,  
Fumio Masutani

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE SŌTŌ APPROACH TO ZEN

Reiho Masunaga

1. The Gist of Buddhist Thought
2. Outline of Zen Buddhism
3. Essence of Zen and Its Historical Development
4. The Standpoint of Dōgen and His Ideas on Time
5. *Uji* (Translated from the *Shōbōgenzō*)
6. *Shōzi* (Translated from the *Shōbōgenzō*)
7. *Fukanzazengi* (Rules for Zazen)
8. *Zazenyōjinki* (Points to Watch in Zazen)
9. *Genjōkoan* (Translated from the *Shōbōgenzō*)
10. *Bendōwa* (Translated from the *Shōbōgenzō*)
11. *Shushōgi* (True Meaning of Training and Enlightenment)
12. *Sandōkai* (Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i)
13. *Hōkyōzammai* (Pao-ching-san-mei)
14. The Place of Dōgen in Zen Buddhism

# THE RELIGIOUS WORLD IN JAPAN

## Understanding Contemporary Japanese Religions (1)

"The last time I saw you I said that I was a Shintoist, but I should have said that I am a Buddhist," exclaimed an eager young Japanese to his foreign friend. Then he added with a somewhat embarrassed smile, "I really don't know what I am; I guess I'm both."

This situation is not in the least unusual. In fact, it is very general throughout Japan. Probably every foreigner interested in things Japanese has at some time or other had a similar experience. Indeed, it is not at all uncommon for a Japanese to say, when asked about his religion, "I don't know," or "I have none." Consequently, it is not surprising that the Japanese people are often regarded as very indifferent to religion. Yet the facts would seem to indicate otherwise.

According to the Ministry of Education's "1959 Religions Year Book," as of December 31, 1957, approximately 80 million people

were adherents of Shinto, 44 million of Buddhist, 600,000 of Christian, and 4 million of other religious denominations. In other words, in a population of 92 million a total of 135 million people were affiliated in some manner with one or more religious denominations! What does this mean?

Setting aside questions regarding the accuracy of these statistics and the validity of the categories, the fact remains that from an Occidental point of view this is a strange, not to say an incomprehensible situation. It is only natural that it should cause confusion in the minds of foreigners.

There are, to be sure, two simple explanations of the statistics. In the first place, Buddhist and Shinto denominations and Shinto Shrines are not as a rule dogmatic and exclusive. In the second place, generally speaking, local shrines and temples do not have an individual membership system such



as is common in the Occident. But the question is much more involved than this, and further explanation is required. First, however, comment of a more general nature is called for.

.....

Understanding Japanese religious life is really not as difficult as it seems. Certainly it need not be as difficult as it is. A great deal of the present difficulty arises solely because, in attempting to study religious phenomena in this country or anywhere else in the Orient, for that matter, the Occidental utilizes his traditional "tools" without any re-adjustment. This is not the case, of course, with the trained scholar—the historian, anthropologist, sociologist, and philosopher, for example, who is scientifically equipped for his task—but it is all too true for the general student and others who attempt to understand the religions of Japan without specialized training. Their "instruments" are not calibrated for the situation in the Orient. Their definitions and categories are definitely Occidental. Consequently, their observations are often

very inaccurate, and when carefully analyzed mean little or nothing.

For example, a primary category in Occidental religious inquiry is that of theism. The Occidental scholar in examining Oriental religions generally seeks to discover whether they are monotheistic, polytheistic, atheistic, etc., without first determining whether his definitions are satisfactory, and whether or not a religion of necessity must be theistic or atheistic, as he understands these terms.

When, therefore, he comes into contact with a religion that has no special concern about the existence or non-existence of a god, or has a concept of deity that does not fit his god-concept, or that neither affirms nor denies, or may both affirm and deny the existence of God, he is indeed confused. Again, when he brings up the question of ethics to test a religion by the quality of its ethical teachings, and learns that religion and ethics are regarded as separate categories, he is at loss as to how to proceed. If so, he need not be too discouraged. It may even happen to a Japanese. One of the Chris-

tian participants in an Institute-sponsored roundtable conference once reported that for the first time in his life he had learned that there was a "religion without either ethics or god!"

Very obviously, the basic problem is, "What is Religion?" And, here again, the difficulty is generally considerable because the student invariably applies his own definition without regard to the actual conditions in this part of the world. How many people have been told, for example, that "Buddhism is not a religion," or that "Shinto is not a religion!"

What is religion? This is a very interesting and important question, but further discussion of it would involve an incursion into the area reserved for the contributors, so the temptation to digress must be resisted. This year the International Institute for the Study of Religions in sponsoring a roundtable conference on this subject. When completed, a report of the conference will be published in this journal. In the meantime, by way of preparation, an early issue will present a thought-provoking article in this

area. Suffice it to say, as one eminent scholar said recently on the radio, "If religion is only what Christians think it is, then neither Buddhism nor Shinto can properly be called religions."

Under these circumstances it should be apparent that to ask about a person's religion, or to ask specifically whether a person is a Buddhist or Shintoist, may very likely pose a real question which cannot be answered as simply as an Occidental is usually inclined to think. He very likely may wonder why anyone should ask such a strange question? To a foreigner the individual Japanese may appear to be confused and he may be; but the real confusion probably lies elsewhere.

Returning now to our explanation of the statistics, we noted that generally speaking Buddhism and Shinto are neither dogmatic nor exclusive and that they do not have a membership system. Japanese shrines, temples, churches, denominations, etc., as a rule are not dogmatic. There are no creedal statements that must be accepted

as a condition for affiliation with Buddhist temples or Shinto Shrines. The idea that there might be, or should be, would shock many Japanese. True, the great schools of Buddhism, such as Shingon, Tendai, Pure Land, Nichiren, and Zen have their own unique doctrines which distinguish one from the other, and the same is true to a lesser extent of most of the great Buddhist denomination within these schools; but none of these have creedal statements the acceptance of which constitute a test for affiliation or, in case of denial, a cause for dismissal.

Irrespective of what Buddhism and Shinto may be historically, temples and shrines in Japan are regarded more or less in a functional manner. In general, they complement each other. The average Japanese individual is brought up in a community where as a child on certain occasions he is taken to a shrine, and on others to a temple. To all intents and purposes, Shinto shrines celebrate the events of life, personal and communal. Buddhist temples are preoccupied with the performance of funeral and ancestral

ceremonies. In most cases, the individual's Buddhist affiliation is with the temple which traditionally has performed the funeral and ancestral rites for the family. Shrine affiliation will depend primarily on the guardian kami\* of one's ancestral home and one's present residence.

Thus, regardless of a person's faith, assuming that each individual either consciously or unconsciously has some kind of religious faith, he is by the fact of birth in a certain family and residence in a given community an adherent of some temple and a parishioner of some one or more shrines. He may or may not participate in or contribute to these institutions. Probably he will do so as a matter of custom, or to avoid argument. But at no time in his life is he ever expected to affirm his faith in any creed or set of doctrines, or to "join" a temple or shrine. His affiliation is assumed. It is not a question of *Buddhism or Shinto*: both play a part in his life. If he wishes to sever a tradi-

---

\* 神, The principal term for deity in Shinto.

## THE RELIGIOUS WORLD IN JAPAN

tional affiliation, he must take the initiative. This rarely happens.

Since religious institutions are primarily functional, that which brings satisfaction is cultivated; that which contributes nothing is as far as possible avoided. Therefore, if an individual finds satisfaction in joining some other religious organization, such as one of the newer religious movements, or if he feels enriched by Christian hymns, Bible reading, or listening to sermons; this need not necessarily disturb his traditional affiliations. The shrines take it for granted that their parishioners will be connected with some temple or Shinto church. They have no objections if any of them become Christians, as long as the relationship with the shrines remains undisturbed. Buddhist temples usually expect, but may not always encourage, their adherents to fulfill their duties as parishioners of shrines. Certainly very few oppose it; and probably few ever object if any parishioners become Christians, provided again that relations with the temple continue to be respected.

This multiple religious relationship is generally referred to in Japan and abroad as "dual-faith," as if a kind of spiritual bifurcation exists which compartmentalizes the religious life of an individual. Such is not the case. The term "dual-faith" is a misnomer. Insofar as any individual is a unified personality, his religious faith is also unified. Except for those that have come in contact with the different point of view of the Occident, the situation already described is taken as a matter of course. Few, if any, are aware of any inconsistency, much less conflict. The Japanese people as a whole are neither *simply* Buddhist, Shinto, nor anything else. They have only *one* faith: a faith that has evolved from the streams of various faiths which have merged to form the "religious life and faith of the Japanese people."

There are, of course, exceptions. A few Buddhist as well as all Christian denominations are dogmatic and exclusive. Each of these expects its members to confine their religious experiences to the tenets and observances of one

## THE RELIGION WORLD IN JAPAN

denomination or doctrinal system. Moreover, just as Christians do not hesitate to call themselves "Christians," so there are some individuals who definitely say they are "Buddhists" or "Shintoists;" but careful observation of the religious life of the country reveals that most people are neither Buddhists nor Shintoists in the strict meaning of these terms. They are Shintoistic Buddhists or Buddhist Shintoists. In other words, they are for the most part adherents of the unique faith of the Japanese people. An understanding of this situation is the first step toward understanding the religious life of the Japanese people.

(W. P. W.)

---

### Questions and Problems

This section is for your use. Send in your questions or problems.



Here's a simple one to start with.

#### **Are the Imperial Regalia at Ise ?**

In two English volumes on world religions currently being used as college textbooks, the authors state that the "divine Imperial regalia" are at Ise. This is incorrect. The mirror is at the Grand Shrine of Ise; the sword, which incidentally is not the original sword, is at the Ausuta Shrine in Nagoya, and the jewels are at the Imperial palace in Tokyo.



## CHRONOLOGY FOR 1959

**Jan. 5** —Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa, noted Christian leader collapsed in Takamatsu, Kagawa Prefecture in Shikoku. (He remained bed-ridden throughout the year.)

**Jan. 6** —The Reverend Akira Ebizawa (75), former General Secretary of the National Christian Council (Nihon Kirisutokyō Kyōgi Kai) and outstanding Christian administrator and leader, died in his home. He was posthumously awarded the Fourth Order of the Sacred Treasure.

**Jan. 8** —Austrian Chancellor Julius Raab on his ten-day goodwill visit to Japan as an official guest of the Japanese Government presented the World Peace Memorial Cathedral in Hiroshima with sixteen stained glass windows.

**Jan. 13** —Miss Michiko Shōda, fiancée of Crown Prince Akihito received instructions at the Imperial Palace on the "Rites and Ceremonies of the Imperial Court."

**Jan. 16** —The Rev. Hariuchi Yonemitsu, priest of the Saga Gokoku

Shrine, departed for a three-week visit to Japanese communities in South America as Shrine Shinto's first goodwill ambassador to South America and to conduct memorial services for Japanese pioneers and war-dead.

**Jan. 25** —Miss Michiko Shōda received instructions at the Imperial Palace on "Rites and Festivals of the Grand Shrine of Ise."

**Jan. 29** —The Executive Committee of the Liberal Democratic Party appointed a special committee to study the question of giving the Grand Shrine of Ise a special legal status and possibly revising the Religious Juridical Persons Law. (Shūkyō Hōjin Hō) (In 1956 the then Minister of Education, Ichirō Kiyose, submitted the question of revising the Religious Juridical Persons Law to the Religious Juridical Persons Council and during the course of its study the problem of giving Ise and other shrines a special status was raised but the Council failed to make a favorable recommendation).

—Pursuant to a Ministry of Education notice of August 28, 1958, the National Christian Council

## CHRONOLOGY FOR 1959

asked the Christian Liaison Committee (Kirisutokyō Rengō Kai) to study the problem of holding public school-sponsored athletic events and meetings on Sundays.

**Feb. 1** —The Honorable Nobusuke Takatsukasa, chief priest of Meiji Shrine and president of the Association of Shinto Shrines (Jinja Honchō) died.

**Feb. 3** —The Association of Shintō Shrines celebrated its 13th anniversary.

**Feb. 4** —The Maebashi District Court ruled that a chief priest had no right to dis-inter an urn from the temple graveyard because a former adherent, converted to Sōka Gakkai, no longer desired to have the temple conduct memorial rites of the ancestor involved. (See note at end of this chronology.)

**Feb. 9** —Former Minister of Education, Tō Matsunaga, chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party's special committee on revision of the Religious Juridical Persons Law addressed the second general meeting of the All Japan Religious Political Association (Zen Nihon Shūkyō Seiji Remmei). (He pointed out the special relationship existing be-

tween the Imperial Family and the Grand Shrine of Ise, and the fact that Yasukuni Shrine is devoted to the veneration of the war-dead of the entire nation. The address resulted in a heated discussion, pro and con, in the vernacular press.)

**Feb. 11** —The enthronement of the first Emperor, Jimmu Tennō, was observed at a special public meeting held in Hibiya Hall in Tokyo and at many shrines and in many communities throughout the country.

**Feb. 11** —Tokyo District of United Church of Christ in Japan (Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan) issued a statement opposing special status for Ise Shrine.

**Feb. 12** —Representatives of the Liberal Democratic Party met with National Christian Council to discuss proposed special status for Ise and other shrines especially related to the Imperial Family. (Subsequently other meetings were held with no conclusive results.)

**Feb. 16** —The Vatican Radio inaugurated a Japanese-language broadcast beamed to Japan three times a week.

**Feb. 27** —Executive Committee of the United Church of Christ in Japan issued statement opposing

special status for Ise Shrine.

**Feb. 27** —Dr. Hidenobu Kuwata, president of Tokyo Union Theological Seminary, contributed an article to the newspaper Asahi in which he argued the religious nature of Ise and other shrines and pointed out the dangers of granting special status to the shrines.

**Mar. 1** —Tenkōkyō made its Los Angeles branch, founded in 1958, its headquarters in America.

**Mar. 2** —Risshō Kōsei Kai established a Hawaii branch.

**Mar. 4** —Special meeting of the Christian Liaison Committee to hear report from the Rev. Keitarō Nishimura on the Feb. 12th conference between representatives of religions and Liberal Democratic Party leaders regarding the Religious Juridical Persons Law.

(The Committee voted to oppose granting special status for Ise Shrine and revision of the Religious Juridical Persons Law.)

**Mar. 10.** —National Christian Council annual meeting: Dr. Takeshi Mutō elected chairman, Bishop

Hinsuke Yashiro, vice chairman.

A resolution was passed opposing special status for Ise Shrine.

**Mar. 12** —His Eminence Gregory Peter XV, Cardinal Agagianian, Pro-Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, arrived for a two-week visit. On the following day he was received in audience by His Majesty, The Emperor.

**Mar. 27** —In commemoration of the 2,500th anniversary\* of the Buddha, a four-day celebration (*Jayanti*) was held in Tokyo under the auspices of a specially created committee and financed by a grant of ¥30 million from the Japanese Government. (Forty-four foreign guests representing eleven countries attended. These were: Burma (6) Cambodia (3), Ceylon (4), Nationalist China (4), India (5), Laos (3), Malaya (2), Pakistan (4), Sikkim (1), Singapore (2), and Thailand (6). At a symposium conducted as a part of the program the following subjects were discussed:

1. The idea of peace in Gautama's teaching and how to attain it.
2. The teachings of Gautama and Industrial Civilization.
3. The Significance of Gautama's teach-

\* Due to differing chronologies it is not clear precisely what is being commemorated. The first 2,500th anniversary of the Buddha was celebrated in Japan in 1934.

## CHRONOLOGY FOR 1959

ing in contemporary world thought.)

**Mar. 30** —Mr. Naotake Satō, president of the Association of Ise Shrine Supporters (*Jingū Hōsan Kai*), gave a press conference at Ise City in which he outlined the reasons why Ise should be given special legal status. (He contended that the pilgrimages of the Emperor to the Grand Shrine of Ise should be regarded as public acts, and that the sanctuary and grounds necessary for the Emperor in performing rituals and paying homage should be state property.)

**Apr. 1** —The Japan Buddhist Federation met for four days in Kyoto with most of the foreign guests to the Tokyo *Jayanti* present.

**Apr. 2** —The national headquarters of the Good Neighbor Movement contributed ¥5 million to Ceylon to assist in an English translation of the Buddhist sūtras.

**Apr. 5** —Dr. Sokyō Ono of Kokugakuin University (Shinto) contributed an article in the *Shinshūkyō* (New Religious Organizations) Newspaper in which he reviewed the history of the Ise Shrine and argued in favor of returning some of the sanctuary to the Imperial Family. (However, Dr. Ono is opposed to having shrines given a special status

outside the Religions Juridical Persons Law.)

**Apr. 6** —The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend and Right Honorable Geoffrey Francis Fisher, arrived. The following day he was received in audience by His Majesty, the Emperor.

**Apr. 7** —A week-long celebration of the centennial of the Anglican Episcopal Church of Japan was opened with a mass meeting at the Tokyo Municipal Gymnasium attended by many foreign dignitaries of the Church.

**Apr. 10** —The wedding ceremony of Crown Prince Akihito and Miss Michiko Shōda was performed at the Imperial Palace Sanctuaries.

(This is the first ceremony at these shrines since the end of World War II to be regarded as an official act of the state. The couple paid respects at the Grand Shrine of Ise on the 18th., the tomb of Emperor Jimmu on the 19th, and the tombs of Emperor Taisho and Empress Teimei on the 21st.)

—His Holiness Pope John XXIII sent a radio message congratulating the Crown Prince on his marriage and expressing his wishes for the spiritual progress and prosperity of the entire Japanese nation.

—Religious organizations generally sent congratulations in connection with the wedding of the Crown Prince and Princess Michiko, but there was some criticism of this to the effect that it was flattery unworthy of religious bodies.

**Apr. 17** —The National Council of Tibetan Problems was organized by leaders of the Buddhist Political Council (Bukkyō Seiji Kyōgikai), and the Buddhist fellowship (Bukkyō Dōshi Kurabu), etc., in connection with the escape of the Dalai Lama from Tibet.

**Apr. 25** —Chūgai Nippō reported the attitudes of religious leaders and scholars on the question of the state wedding and the Constitution in relation to the principle of the separation of church and state.

(This subject was somewhat widely discussed in the religious and secular press.)

**Apr. 26** —Tenth anniversary of the International Buddhist Association (Kokusai Bukkyō Kyōkai) at Honganji temple in Tsukiji, Tokyo.

**Apr. 29** —The Japan Baptist League (Nihon Baputesuto Dōmei) composed of American Baptist-related churches, was organized.

**May 2** —Under the title “Is Shin-

to a Religion?” the Chūgai Nippō published a series of statements from its readers. (Most comments favored a special status for shrines because they constitute the basis for Japanese tradition and the Japanese national spirit. However, some criticized the proposal to give Ise Shrine special status because of its relations with the Imperial Family. They argued that this would be contrary to the spirit of the Imperial Rescript of January 1, 1946, and do damage to the efforts to develop a democratic country.)

**May 5** —Kanda Dera (temple), center of the Truth Movement, completed a translation and publication of 1,000 copies of the Lotus Sūtra in Braille. An Association for the Blind was organized which will publish Buddhist scriptures and a periodical in Braille, establish a tape library, and train volunteer workers to assist the blind.

**May 8** —Association of Indian and Buddhist Studies (Indo Bukkyō Gakkai) received grant of ¥950,000 from Ministry of Education for the publication of an index for the Taishō Edition of the Tripitaka (Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō).

**May 12** —The Osaka Christian Crusade (May 12—June 1) under leadership of Dr. Bob Pierce at the



New Asahi Festival Hall was opened. (Estimated total attendance, 100,000; total cards signed, 7,500)

**May 15** —The Rev. Reiji Ōyama special missionary of the Japanese Evangelical Overseas Mission returned from a five-month tour of the Philippines.

**May 15** —On the ground of alleged pro-communist affiliation, the Union of New Religious Organizations of Japan (Shin Nihon Shūkyō Dantai Rengōkai) withdrew from a Conference of Religionists (Shūkyō-sha Konwa Kai) affiliated with the Japan Council against A—H Bombs and decided not to participate in the World Conference against A—H Bombs sponsored by the Japan Council in early August.

**May 17** —National Rally of Shinto Youth was held at Ise. (Moved by the experience of being permitted to worship within the outer enclosure of the Inner Shrine, the youths vowed loyalty to the Emperor and the ideals of the Japanese nation, and decided to organize an association for youth at each shrine throughout the country.)

**May 23** —The Executive Board of the Association of Shinto Shrines, with Princess Kitashirakawa, Honorary President, and fifty-six

representatives of prefectural boards in attendance, voted to seek revision of the Religious Juridical Persons Law, the enactment of a special law for the Grand Shrine of Ise, the granting of a special legal status to all shrines, and the erection of a Shrine Shinto Representatives (*ujiko sōdai*) Center.

**May 24—26** —Executive Board of the Association of Shinto Shrines elected new officers (Honorable Yukitada Sasaki, former chief priest of the Grand Shrine of Ise, was elected president) For the first time in the history of Shrine Shinto two laymen became members of the executive committee of the Board.

**May 25** —The Nagasaki Diocese became a Metropolitan See; Archbishop Paul Yamaguchi was named first archbishop.

**June 2** —The known religious affiliation of successful candidates in the election for the House of Councillors was as follows: Buddhist (Jōdo Shin) 4, Christianity 4, Shinto 8, Sōka Gakkai 6. (The successful election of all six candidates of Sōka Gakkai created a national sensation. Its nine members constitute the

fourth largest group in the House. Three of the four Buddhists, one of whom is a prominent priest, belong to the Liberal Democratic Party. The other is a Socialist.)

**June 14** —The Cultural Interchange Institute for Buddhists (Bukkyō-to Bunka Kōryū Kyōkai) made a sociological survey of temples in Tokyo and Osaka, *Social Functions of the Buddhist Temple* (*Toshi Jiin Shakaiteki Kinō*) with the cooperation of thirteen Buddhist colleges and Universities.

**June 15** —Tenth anniversary of founding of International Christian University was observed.

**June 22** —Professors Daisetsu Suzuki, Shōson Miyamoto, Hideo Kishimoto, and Hajime Nakamura represented Japan at the Third East-West Philosophers Conference held for five weeks at the University of Hawaii.

**June 25** —Buddhist members of the House of Councillors, other than members of Sōka Gakkai, held a meeting under the auspices of the magazine, Sekai Bukkyō (World Buddhism) to discuss religion and politics. (In the opinion of the participants, their activity results in the incorporation of the religious spirit into

politics and this is regarded as useful for the realization of a truly peaceful society. They said that their participation transcended both sect and party and was different from representatives of Sōka Gakkai, which they believed violated the principle of separation of church and state and religious freedom.)

**July. 3** —Re-establishment of Jingū Kōgakkan at Ise was decided at a meeting of seventy political, business, and Shrine Shinto leaders, including former prime minister Shigeru Yoshida and Tadashi Adachi, President of the Japan Chamber of Commerce. (Until 1945 the Jingū Kōgakkan was a government seminary for shrine priests. It was ordered closed by the Shinto Directive, December 15, 1945.)

**July. 9** —Forty-two members of the Lacour Centennial Evangelism Team arrived for two-month service with the churches.

—Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi, was received in audience at the Vatican.

**July. 25** —The Vicariate Apostolic of Hiroshima was raised to a diocese.

**Aug. 3** —A "Peace Evening" (Heiwa no yūbe) as a non-political demonstration against A—H bombs and the Eighth anniversary of the

## CHRONOLOGY FOR 1959

establishment of the Union of New Religious Organizations of Japan (Shin Nihon Shūkyō Dantai Rengōkai) were observed at a mass meeting at the Tokyo Municipal Gymnasium.

**Aug. 24** —The Association of Shin-to Shrines announced that 370 women, 76 of whom are chief priests, are serving as priests of shrines throughout the country. (Most but not all of them are in relatively unimportant shrines. One is vice chief priest of a former national grade shrine.)

**Sept. 26** —Typhoon Vera (No. 15), the most disastrous typhoon in Japanese history swept the Ise Bay-Nagoya area with an unprecedented loss of life and untold property damage, including the Grand Shrine of Ise and many temples and churches. (In the relief effort that followed most of the religious organizations of the country raised contributions of material and money, and many of them organized relief bodies to assist in the rehabilitation of the area)

**Sept. 30** —A conference on the Ise problem was held with representatives of the Japan Protestant Council (Nihon Shinkyō Remmei), an organization of conservative

churches not affiliated with the National Christian Council.

**Oct. 1** —The centennial of Protestantism was commemorated by a month-long series of special evangelistic campaigns conducted in the six centers—Sendai, Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka-Kobe, Okayama, Hiroshima—sponsored by conservative churches and missionaries not related to the National Christian Council. Dr. Oswald J. Smith of Toronto, Canada, was one of the principal speakers.

**Oct. 4** —Enshrinement service for Princes Yoshihisa and Nagahisa of the Kitashirakawa family at Yasukuni Shrine, in the presence of Princess Fusako Kitashirakawa, High Priestess of the Grand Shrine of Ise. (This was the first enshrinement of an Imperial prince.)

**Oct. 5** —Six-day convention sponsored by a specially organized Japan Protestant Centennial Committee opened at the Youth Hall in the Meiji Shrine Outer Gardens.

**Oct. 12** —Evangelical Missionary Association of Japan-sponsored two-day nationwide strategy conference "to discuss the effective covering of Japan in our generation with

the Christian message" opened in Tokyo.

**Oct. 23** —About 700 delegates attended the three-day 7th Annual meeting of the Japan Buddhist Federation (Zen Nihon Bukkyō Kai) at Chion-in temple in Kyoto.

(Dr. Hideki Yukawa, Nobel Prize winner, lectured on "Science and Man." The conference was divided into three sections: missionary work and international problems, politics and economics, and social problems. The discussions centered in (1) counter-measures to combat Sōka Gakkai, (2) opposition to granting special status to Shrine Shinto, (3) the organization of the Buddhist Political League, and (4) the movement against the Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs and disarmament. The following resolution was adopted.

#### WORLD PEACE APPEAL

We, Buddhists, faced with an important turning point in the history of the world, hereby earnestly appeal to the world for a solution of all the problems in the world solely on the basis of wisdom and a love for mankind without resorting to violence against the course of civilization, for the simultaneous abolition of all armaments, and for the creation of a unified world welfare-state of absolute peace and lofty civilization.)

**Oct. 26** —Bishop Januarius Kyunosuke Hayasaka, former Bishop of Nagasaki and first Japanese to

become a Catholic bishop, died at the age of seventy-six.

**Nov. 1—8** —National Christian Council-sponsored centennial of Protestantism in Japan commemorated by special meetings, several of which were held in the Tokyo Municipal Gymnasium. (More than two hundred and fifty delegates from fifty countries, including many prominent church dignitaries, attended.)

**Nov. 15** —The Rev. Ryōhachi Ikeda of Yasukuni Shrine and other priests from Japan conducted the autumn festival for the war-dead at the Okinawa Gokoku Shrine in Naha.

**Nov. 21** —His Excellency, the Most Reverend Maximilian de Furstenberg, Apostolic Internuncio to Japan, was named Apostolic Delegate to Australia, New Zealand and Oceania.

**Nov. 26** —Professor Charles E. Perry of Saint Paul's University died from an attack by a drunken student.

**Nov. 29** —The 6th Conference of Kyoto Buddhists was held at Chishaku-in temple in Kyoto November 29th. (The discussion centered on two problems: "Contemporary Youth Problems and Buddhism" and "World

## CHRONOLOGY FOR 1959

Peace." In connection with the former the conclusion was reached that, while modern delinquent youth becomes more brutal, religious youth is inactive. Delinquency, they regarded as due to the mass communications of capitalistic society, social unrest, and the lack of a religious mind in social life rather than to a lack of love or questions of bread and butter. In this connection they felt that Buddhists "must reflect on the fact that they are lacking in a consciousness and practice of social culture. Regarding the problem of world peace, they reflected on the Buddhist tendency to escape from the actualities of life and remain bound by the vestiges of feudalism and nationalism in Japanese Buddhism. In connection with a discussion of the US-Japan Security Treaty and Communist China-Japan relations, it was felt that Buddhists should exert themselves to actively defend the peaceful Constitution."

**Dec. 2** —The executive committee of the Board of Directors of the Union of New Religious Organization of Japan discussed revision of the Religious Juridical Persons Law and giving special status to Ise and other shrines.

**Dec. 4** —The Reverend Tokuchika Miki, President of the Union of New Religious Organization of Japan appeared before the special committee to study revision of the Religious Juridical Persons Law of

the Liberal Democratic Party and spoke in opposition to revising the Law and giving special status to Ise Shrine.

**Dec. 13** —First preparatory meeting of the National Buddhist Political League (Nihon Bukkyō Seiji Dōmei) held. (It was decided that the movement should seek to promote the well-being of the country and the establishment of a World Federation, and to combat communism. Leading Buddhist leaders are participating in this movement as a result of the advance of Sōka Gakkai in politics and the leftist character of the General Council of Trade Unions (Sōhyō). The Buddhist Political League was informally organized in July. According to its sponsors the purpose is to resolve the strain in the political and economic world by means of Buddhist thought. In some of the preliminary discussions it was proposed that a Buddhist Political Party be organized but this was rejected. The plan is to make it a league to study political problems. The movement is criticized by liberal Buddhists as being rightist and reactionary. Those that claim to be neutral politically say that it will violate the principle of the separation of church and state and the spirit of democracy and that it will fall into the same error as the Sōka Gakkai and rightist Shintoists.)

**Dec. 21** —YWCA Community Christmas Pageant at Tokyo Municipal Gymnasium.



## Soka Gakkai and Temple Cemeteries

During the past several years there have been more than a hundred cases of disputes between the followers of Sōka Gakkai and temples which have charge of these followers' ancestral graves.

Although there are now public burial grounds, most Japanese families are connected with some temple which historically has had charge of their ancestral graves. They are registered with these temples and, irrespective of the personal affiliation of some individuals with other temples or religious organizations, they have expected such temples to conduct funeral and memorial services for members of their families. Naturally there is a fee for each service.

The system has worked satisfactorily and except for some difficulty involving Christians, which has arisen now and then, there has been no particular problem. Sōka Gakkai, however, insists that it has a monopoly on truth and its devotees are not permitted to allow the priests of other Buddhist

temples to conduct memorial services for their ancestors. Consequently, difficulties have arisen and the temples have had resort to counter-actions.

One remarkable case arose some three years ago when a former supporter, having become a member of Sōka Gakkai, notified his ancestral temple that he no longer wished to have memorial services conducted for his ancestors. On hearing this the chief priest, acting on the assumption that the deceased was without relatives, exhumed the urn of the ancestor involved and placed it with the ashes of those who had died without relatives. This angered the person concerned and he brought suite into the Kiryu branch of the Maebashi District Court. On February 4, 1959, the court ruled that the priest had no right to remove the urn without the permission of the owner and sentenced him to four months imprisonment with a two-year stay of execution.

In June, 1959, a similar case oc-

curred in Tochigi Prefecture. There a man is suing Keisokuji Temple which refuses to permit a burial because the owner of the grave has become a member of Sōka Gakkai. This case was still pending at the end of the year, but Buddhists throughout the area, angered at the aggressive actions of Sōka Gakkai in resorting to forced conversion (*shaku-buku*) to secure new adherents, have collected funds to fight the case in support of Keisokuji.

Still another case, which was left pending at the end of the year in Honjo, Saitama Prefecture, involved Taishoin, a Shingon Temple, and a Sōka Gakkai devotee. When his father died, the devotee asked Sōka Gakkai to conduct the funeral service but wanted to bury the ashes in the temple burial lot. But the temple refused to allow it, claiming that, since the individual concerned was no longer an ad-

herent of the temple but a follower of Sōka Gakkai, which regards the ancestral temple as heretical, said individual should bury his father in a burial ground provided by Sōka Gakkai. To support the temple's position, the priest sought and secured an injunction from the local court to prevent the individual from using the temple burial ground. The temple claimed that the graveyard is for the adherents of the temple and not a general community burial grounds. Sōka Gakkai, however, argued that there are adherents of many faiths buried in the temple graveyard and that the individual owner of the lot has the right to use it without interference from the temple.

There was a similar case in Zushi involving a Christian woman who was not allowed to bury her husband in the temple burial grounds. This also was pending at the end of the year.

## Religious Statistics

Everyone concerned with religions in Japan seems to want statistics. Therefore, **Contemporary Religions in Japan** will periodically publish such accurate information in this field as is available. However, a word of caution is in order. There are certain areas in which religious statistics are reasonably reliable; in others, they have only a relative reliability. For example, statistics regarding the number of denominations, local organizations (shrine, temples, churches etc.), installations, and personnel (clergy) should be reasonably accurate; while statistics regarding the attendance at meetings, or the number of adherents, should be used with great discrimination.

Everyone seems to want to know about the number of adherents, but there is probably no area in which statistical information is quite so unreliable and of so little comparative value. In the first place, there is no religious census in Japan and the only way to estimate the number of believers of any religion is by the dubious process of sam-

pling the population. In the second place, most religious bodies do not have a membership system, so that it is impossible to arrive at more than an approximation of the number of adherents of even any local shrine or temple.

On the one hand, irrespective of the faith of the individuals concerned, to estimate the total number of their adherents temples usually multiply the number of families on their lists by four or five and then add the number of any persons that may be individually affiliated. This method is also used by many Shinto sects. Shrines, on the other hand, usually consider all the residents of their "parishes" as "belonging" to them or, if they have no "parish," they estimate their worshippers by the number of amulets distributed annually. Consequently, since many parishes overlap and many people customarily receive amulets from more than one shrine, the value of the total is of highly questionable.

Even among organizations that have a membership system, Chris-

tian churches, for example, the method of computation is so varied that the totals offer no sound basis for comparison. In one case, for example, a denomination may count baptized children as "members," while in another only adults who have had considerable training are so regarded.

About the only real value there is in such statistics is that they provide a rough basis for a very general estimate of the relative strength of any given organization in the total religious scene. They also provide a rough means of estimating the growth or lack of growth in specific organizations, although even this is not always possible, because with changes in the administration the methods of computation and reporting are frequently changed.

Given the imaginative quality which piety tends to infuse into religious statistical reports and the fact that many people in Japan at one and the same time are counted as adherents of a temple, worshippers of one or more shrines, and possibly as members of some other religious denomination, it is

inevitable that the total number of adherents will continue to exceed the population of the country! There is, therefore, every reason for caution in making comparisons and pronouncements based on such statistical reports.

At present the only comprehensive statistics in the field of religion in Japan are published in the "Religions Year Book" (*Shūkyō Nenkan*) issued by the Ministry of Education. For Christianity the best source for statistics is the "Christian Year Book" (*Kirisutokyo Nenkan*) published by the "Christian News" (*Kirisutokyo Shimbun*). Statistical information regarding non-Christian bodies can be secured from the headquarters of the various denominations and organizations. Generally speaking, however, with certain reservations, the information provided by the Ministry of Education is about as reliable as that which can be secured directly from the organizations concerned.

The following table gives the totals for Buddhism, Christianity, Shinto and other religions. More detailed statistics will be published in subsequent issues of the journal

# I RELIGIONS, LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS, CLERGY, AND ADHERENTS\*

Religions	Local Organizations				Clergy—Adherents		
	Shrines	Temples	Churches	Preaching Places	Total		
Shinto	79,752	3	24,426	10,472	114,653	186,326	78,962,589
Buddhism	15	74,887	5,544	10,074	90,520	127,705	44,063,907
Christianity*	—	—	3,930	1,766	5,696	12,836	678,258
Others	17	1	1,028	3,225	4,271	12,247	3,982,366
Total	79,784	74,891	34,928	25,537	215,140	339,114	127,687,120

\* The statistics for Christianity are as of December 30, 1958 or March 31, 1959 and are taken from the 1960 "Christian Year Book" (*Kirisutokyo Nenkan*) published by the Christian News Co., (Kirisuto Shinbun Sha) Tokyo. Other statistics are as of December 30, 1957, and are taken from the 1958 "Religions Year Book" (*Shukyo Nenkan*), published by the Ministry of Education, Tokyo.



# TRANSLATIONS AND OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

## The Constitution of Japan

(Articles concerning religion and related human rights.)

### CHAPTER III. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE PEOPLE

**Article 11.** The people shall not be prevented from enjoying any of the fundamental human rights. These fundamental human rights guaranteed to the people by this Constitution shall be conferred upon the people of this and future generations as eternal and inviolate rights.

**Article 12.** The freedoms and rights guaranteed to the people by this Constitution shall be maintained by the constant endeavor of the people, who shall refrain from any abuse of these freedoms and rights and shall always be responsible for utilizing them for the public welfare.

**Article 13.** All of the people shall be respected as individuals. Their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness shall, to the extent that it does not interfere with the public welfare, be the supreme consideration in legislation and in

other governmental affairs.

**Article 14.** All of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status or family origin. (Latter part omitted)

**Article 16.** Every person shall have the right of peaceful petition for the redress of damage, for the removal of public officials, for the enactment, repeal or amendment of laws, ordinances or regulations and for other matters; nor shall any person be in any way discriminated against for sponsoring such a petition.

**Article 17.** Every person may sue for redress as provided by law from the State or a public entity, in case he has suffered damage through illegal act of any public official.

**Article 19.** Freedom of thought

and conscience shall not be violated.

**Article 20.** Freedom of religion is guaranteed to all. No religious organization shall receive any privileges from the State, nor exercise any political authority.

No person shall be compelled to take part in any religious act, celebration, rite or practice.

The State and its organs shall refrain from religious education or any other religious activity.

**Article 21.** Freedom of assembly and association as well as speech, press and all other forms of expression are guaranteed.

No censorship shall be maintained, nor shall the secrecy of any means of communication be violated.

**Article 22.** Every person shall have freedom to choose and change his residence and to choose his occupation to the extent that it does not interfere with the public welfare.

Freedom of all persons to move to a foreign country and to divest themselves of their nationality shall be inviolate.

**Article 23.** Academic freedom is guaranteed.

**Article 24.** Marriage shall be based only on the mutual consent of both sexes and it shall be maintained through mutual cooperation with the equal rights of husband and wife as a basis.

With regard to choice of spouse, property rights, inheritance, choice of domicile, divorce and other matters pertaining to marriage and the family, laws shall be enacted from the standpoint of individual dignity and the essential equality of the sexes.

**Article 29.** The right to own or to hold property is inviolable.

Property rights shall be defined by law, in conformity with the public welfare. Private property may be taken for public use upon just compensation therefor.

**Article 31.** No person shall be deprived of life or liberty, nor shall any other criminal penalty be imposed, except according to procedure established by law.

**Article 32.** No person shall be denied the right of access to the courts.

**Article 33.** No person shall be apprehended except upon warrant issued by a competent judicial

## TRANSLATIONS AND OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

officer which specifies the offense with which the person is charged, unless he is apprehended, the offense being committed.

**Article 34.** No person shall be arrested or detained without being at once informed of the charges against him or without the immediate privilege of counsel; nor shall he be detained without adequate cause; and upon demand of any person such cause must be immediately shown in open court in his presence and the presence of his counsel.

**Article 35.** The right of all persons to be secure in their homes, papers and effects against entries, searches and seizures shall not be impaired except upon warrant issued for adequate cause and particularly describing the place to be searched and things to be seized, or except as provided by Article 33.

Each search or seizure shall be made upon separate warrant issued by a competent judicial officer.

**Article 36.** The infliction of torture by any public officer and cruel punishments are absolutely forbidden.

**Article 37.** In all criminal cases

the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial tribunal.

He shall be permitted full opportunity to examine all witnesses, and he shall have the right of compulsory process for obtaining witnesses on his behalf at public expense.

At all times the accused shall have the assistance of competent counsel who shall, if the accused is unable to secure the same by his own efforts, be assigned to his use by the State.

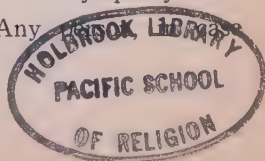
**Article 38.** No person shall be compelled to testify against himself.

Confession made under compulsion, torture or threat, or after prolonged arrest or detention shall not be admitted in evidence.

No person shall be convicted or punished in cases where the only proof against him is his own confession.

**Article 39.** No person shall be held criminally liable for an act which was lawful at the time it was committed, or of which he has been acquitted, nor shall he be placed in double jeopardy.

**Article 40.** Any



## TRANSLATION AND OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

he is acquitted after he has been State for redress as provide by law.  
arrested or detained, may sue the

### CHAPTER VII. FINANCE

**Article 84.** No public money or other property shall be expended or appropriated for the use, benefit or maintenance of any religious institution or association, or for any charitable, educational or benevolent enterprises not under the control of public authority.

*The Japan Year Book 1949—1952*

---

## INSTITUTE NEWS

### Introducing the International Institute for the Study of Religions

The **International Institute for the Study of Religions** (Kokusai Shūkyō Kenkyū Sho) is a non-profit, non-sectarian organization incorporated by the Ministry of Education of the Japanese Government.

The general purpose of the Institute is to promote mutual understanding between persons of different faiths and to develop international understanding on a religious level by the study of religions in Japan and abroad.

The primary purpose of the Institute is to assist foreign scholars and residents in gaining a better understanding of religions in Japan. To accomplish this purpose the Institute conducts research promotes lectures and conferences; plans tours; arranges interviews with Japanese scholars and religious leaders; publishes a quarterly English language journal, "Contemporary Religions in Japan," directories, bulletins and booklets; maintains a reference library on contemporary Japanese religions; and carries on related activities.

The Institute also assists Japanese scholars and religious leaders in their study of religions here and abroad, and to this end publishes a bi-monthly Japanese language magazine, "International Religious News" (**Kokusai Shukyo News**).

The Institute library and reading room is open week days (except holidays) from 9 a. m. to 5 p. m. and on Saturdays from 9 a. m. to noon. Visitors are welcome.



## **Institute Officers**

(Alphabetical order)

### **ADVISORS**

Dr. Iwakichi Ishikawa, President, Kokugakuin University  
Dr. Toraji Makino, Ex-president, Doshisha University  
Dr. Tatsuo Morito, President, Hiroshima University  
Dr. Benkyo Shiio, Ex-president, Taisho University  
Dr. Saburo Yamada, President, Japan Academy

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Dr. Makoto Nagai, Professor, Tokyō University  
(Honorary Chairman)  
Dr. Hideo Kishimoto, Professor, Tokyo University (Chairman)  
Dr. Enkichi Kan, Professor, St. Paul's University  
Kyoshin Kitabatake, Priest, Jodo Shin-shu Honganji-ha  
Yoshio Kobayashi, Professor, Sophia University  
Dr. Fumio Masutani, Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies  
Tsunetaro Miyakoda, General Secretary, Japan Bible Society.  
Dr. Hajime Nakamura, Professor, Tokyo University  
Shuten Oishi, Executive Director, Union of the New Religious  
Organizations of Japan. (General Secretary)  
Dr. Sokyō Ono, Professor, Kokugakuin University  
Sadao Osuga, Director, Tokyo Branch Office of Tenri-kyō  
Yoshitada Takahara, Chief Priest, Yasaka Shrine, Kyoto  
William P. Woodard, Director

### **AUDITORS**

Tatsumi Date, Associate Chief Priest, Meiji Shrine  
Sen Shigenaga, Chief Priest, Asakusa Honganji.

## BOARD OF COUNCILLORS

Dr. Tetsutaro Ariga, Professor, Kyōto University, Kyōto  
Isao Deguchi, President, Ōmoto Aizen'en Kyōgakuin  
Tokunin Fujioto, President, Kyōto Joshi Daigaku, Kyōto  
Dr. Shōkin Furuta, Professor, Hokkaido University (Kamakura)  
Dr. Shinshō Hanayama Professor, Tōkyō University  
Kan'ichi Hirata, Chief Priest, Ōmi Shrine, Ōtsu Shi, Shiga Ken  
Shin'ichirō Imaoka, Minister, Unity Church  
Tan'un Kotani, Supervising Editor, Cultural Interchange Institute  
for Buddhists  
Shōbun Kubota, Professor, Risshō University  
Gikan Matani, Nihon Shortwave Broadcasting Company  
Chūichi Miyake, President, Industrial Arts Museum, Ōsaka  
Toshio Miyake, Minister, Konko-kyō Izuo Kyōkai, Ōsaka  
Dr. Chitoku Morikawa, Ex-president, Ryūkoku University  
Dr. Masayoshi Nishitsunoi, Professor, Kokugakuin University  
Taio Sasaki, Priest, Sōto-shū  
Dr. Wilhelm Schiffer, S. J., Professor, Sophia University  
Aiho Suehiro, Priest, Jōdo Shin-shū Ōtani-ha, Kyōto  
Shōkō Watanabe, Professor, Tōyō University  
Dr. Reirin Yamada, Dean, Komazawa University  
Dr. Susumu Yamaguchi, President, Ōtani University, Kyōto  
Tadaaki Yoshimura, Patriarch, Shinshu-kyō  
Tatsuki Yuasa, Minister, P. L. Kyōdan, Ōsaka

(Unless otherwise indicated the address is Tokyo)

## ENGLISH PUBLICATIONS

### DIRECTORIES

- No. 1. The Sectarian Shinto Federation and Principal Shinto Shrines.
- No. 2. Christian Churches, Denominations and Federations.
- No. 3. Buddhist Denominations.
- No. 4. New Religions and Others.
- No. 5. Courses on Religion in the Universities of Kanto, Tohoku, Hokkaido.
- No. 6. Courses on Religion in the Universities of Western Japan.

### ENGLISH BULLETINS

(Bulletins Nos. 1—4 are in Japanese)

- No. 5. RELIGION AND MODERN LIFE (English and Japanese)  
(November 1958)

A report of a roundtable conference participated in by ten young religionists from Buddhism, Shrine Shinto, Christianity, Ōmoto and a new religion, who discussed from their respective standpoints:

The Place of Man and the Meaning of Human Life  
The Responsibility of Religions in Modern Life  
The Relation of Religion and Ethics  
The Future of Religion in Japan

- No. 6. LIVING BUDDHISM IN JAPAN (English and Japanese)  
(May 1959)

A report based on interviews by a Buddhist scholar with eminent Buddhist leaders and scholars on the following subjects:

The Meaning of Human Life	Problem of sin
Happiness	Death
Misfortune	Buddha and the Pure Land
Social Reform	Non-killing
Health and Faith	Buddhism and the Emperor System



ENGLISH PUBLICATIONS

No. 7. RELIGION AND STATE (August 1959)

Lectures by

Hon. Tokujiro Kanamori, former Chief of the Diet Library.

Dr. Nobushige Ukai, Professor of Constitutional Law, Tokyo University.

Dr. Yoshio Oishi, Professor of Constitutional Law, Kyoto University.

The Meiji Constitution and the Present Constitution by Dr. Jiro Tanaka, Dean of Department of Law, Tokyo University.

No. 8. THE KAMI WAY, An Introduction to Shrine Shinto.

by Dr. Sokyō Ono, Lecturer, Kokugakuin University, in collaboration with William P. Woodard, Director of Research, International Institute for the Study of Religions.

Orders outside Japan may be placed with  
Charles E. Tuttle Co.,  
Rutland, Vermont, USA

# TO APPEAR IN FUTURE ISSUES

## Articles

The Problem of Religion and Modernization in Japan

By Dr. Hideo Kishimoto  
Tokyo University

The Japanese National Character and Religion

By Dr. Tetsuzo Tanikawa  
Hosei University

Roundtable Conference on "Religion and the Japanese People."

Participants: Dr. Ichi Oguchi, Tokyo University  
Dr. Saburo Ienaga, Tokyo Education University  
Dr. Kazo Kitamori, Tokyo Union Theological Seminary  
Dr. Tsunamasa Furuya, (Chairman)

(The above originally appeared on NHK sponsored programs)

The Shinto Directive and the Constitution

By Yoshihiko Ashizu, Editor, Shrine News

## MODERN RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN JAPAN

by Sect Founders and Leaders

Perfect Liberty  
(P. L. Kyodan)

The World Salvation Sect  
(Sekai Kyusei Kyo)

Tensho Kotai Jingu Kyo  
(The so-called Dancing Religion)

Rissho Kosei Kai

Seicho-no-Ie

Soka Gakkai

## Book Reviews

Chang's "The Practice of Zen"

By Dr. Shokin Furuta, Hokkaido University

Takagi's "The Newly Established Religions in Japan"

By Shuten Oishi, Executive Director, Union  
of New Religious Organizations of Japan.

Smith's "Confucianism in Modern Japan"

By Dr. Hideo Kishimoto, Tokyo University

——— Japan, "Its Land, People and Culture"

By the Editor